

The book cover features a large, thin-lined circle that spans across several horizontal bands. The top band is light blue, the middle band is dark blue, and the bottom band is a medium blue. The text is centered within these bands.

ONENESS

OUR HERITAGE
OUR PATH
OUR DESTINY

The dramatic power of oneness
for rediscovering our destiny
and taking charge of our lives.

BILL BAUMAN, PH.D.

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**OUR HERITAGE
OUR PATH
OUR DESTINY**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to an adventure. This book invites you to a sense of discovery, openness and personal power. Through its pages, you will find a new philosophy of human living and a fresh view of our creative activity on earth.

You are about to embark on a unique journey. It is a leap into your own inner consciousness, an experience with your own creative gifts, and a renewed embrace of your role as creator of your world. This adventure is partly for the sake of your personal growth; it is also intended to bring all of us on earth creatively together, in order to create a new world. The philosophy within these pages is designed to create a basis for a new world of human experience, and give us a restored consciousness of our oneness.

Oneness, the theme of this writing, is a powerful term. You will read in the following pages how duality, our historical human path, has led us through many processes, paths and rituals to this moment, in which we are rediscovering our oneness. You will see how we as a human race, in typical dualistic style, have divided ourselves both personally and interpersonally in an attempt to achieve a meaningful life. You will note how duality, in and of itself, is a gift, *if* we use it in its integrative context, that is, in the spirit of oneness.

Actually, a consciousness of oneness is unfolding before our collective eyes. We are already in a world committed to economic interdependence, global intercommunication, and intercultural cooperation. The past decades have witnessed a growing evolution of a unified human consciousness and dedication to a more a united world. Our deepening awareness of and commitment to our environment depicts an increasing sense of oneness with Nature and our planet's natural energy systems. Our growing desire, even demand, for international peace expresses a powerful collective human call for an ideal whose time has come.

This book is about you - you as creator of your life, you as determiner of our world, you as unique contributor to our collective creation of life. Here, you are highlighted as a dynamic and essential creator on earth; you are honored as a most special and purposeful person, with a unique role to perform in our future. This book is dedicated, therefore, to you - the purposeful human, the creator of the future, the embodiment of oneness.

The following pages are dedicated to your coming fully into your natural state of oneness, and becoming your wholly creative, free and dynamic self. Also, this book is dedicated to a human world centered around the joy of our shared creativity. These intentions will be fulfilled when you and every one of us embrace our creative role and purpose freely, wholly and purposefully.

A new world. Many today speak of "the new world order" as an ideal about to be realized. Our human mentality is more open to just such a creation today than ever before. We are truly on the verge of the long awaited "Millennium," or thousand years of peace - not just because a prophesy is being fulfilled or a prayer being answered. It is also because we are now accepting our innate right to bring about what we believe is our right and destiny. We as a human family are ready, finally, to embrace our role as creators of our world in a new and different way, the way of *oneness*.

In oneness, we perceive our differences as the essential ingredients in our creative human existence. A consciousness of oneness integrates all facets of life into their more powerful whole; it is the glue that harmonizes every separate piece of our human puzzle. Oneness is the path by which we are integrating every individual person into the "human family," and are inviting every section of the human orchestra to play together in harmony. Oneness is, indeed, our heritage, our path and our destiny.

CHAPTER 1

ONENESS: OUR HERITAGE

Deep in the heart of each of us lies an inner reality. I have chosen to call this reality *oneness*. It is our innermost source of knowing, of wisdom, of perspective. Oneness is inherent in you and me, and it lives as a vital part of us, alongside every other reality that we have created. Oneness is our heritage.

We all know the various stories of our "creation" as a human race. Every major religion and culture have beliefs, stories or scriptures that give specific accounts of our creation as a planet and as a human species. The common theme in all these accounts goes like this: human beings were brought into existence in a spirit of divine love, created "in the image and likeness of God," made perfect, and intended to live happily and freely on this nurturing and supportive planet. Then something happened, and our natural state of bliss was changed. We entered a period of separation, struggle and incompleteness; we forgot our original state of oneness and began experiencing our world as wrapped in duality.

Duality, of course, is a phenomenon of perceived opposites. According to our historical beliefs, we stopped experiencing life as an expression of harmony, peace and simplicity. In their place, we began seeing opposites: good and evil, right and wrong, perfection and imperfection, enlightenment and ignorance, love and hate, winning and losing, positive and negative, good guys and bad guys. We began to experience life as an ongoing struggle between these poles of opposites. We started evaluating persons and events as good or bad, and used this judgment as a basis for positioning ourselves in relation to them. We trained ourselves to seek out the positive while learning to deal with the negative, both within ourselves and in our world. World wars, interpersonal conflicts, internal emotional pain, and a host of other struggles have resulted from experiencing life in terms of duality.

In the meantime, oneness - our original state of consciousness and our innermost life force - sat by and waited. Relegated to a place deeper within the consciousness of each human being, it has been sought after, briefly experienced (e.g., in rare meditative states), and occasionally brought into a temporary state of fuller awareness. For centuries, however, our innate reality of oneness has been living in the wings, while duality has occupied the center stage in our human play of life.

Oneness has played, however, an occasional and significant role, much like a bit actor. It tends to appear long enough to remind us that we are not abandoned forever in duality's implied judgment system; it reminds us that we have a power within us to transform our perceptions of duality into ones of harmony. This bit actor, however conscious or unconscious of its presence we are, reveals a truth about us that gives us hope.

Whatever the truth of our varied stories of creation, we human beings have for centuries perceived duality not so much as a gift but as a source of conflict. In our pursuit of duality's positive qualities, we have pressured ourselves to be good, be smart, be right, be pure. Yet all with a price: guilt, fear, pain and stress.

This book invites us to take a unique look at duality - not as a source of pain and conflict, but as a special opportunity to exercise our innate creative energies and purposes.

Rather than judge our dualistic human world as inherently geared toward divisiveness and unhappiness, I am inviting us to embrace it from a fresh and different perspective, that of *oneness*. We no longer need to remain narrowly preoccupied with the individual pieces of the puzzle of human life. Rather, we can re-focus our attention on the big picture afforded us by these pieces: the picture of *oneness*.

Let's examine our human condition from the integrative eyes of oneness. Could it be that our original state is still as available to us as in the beginning? Let's assume that we were indeed created perfect and harmonious. Let's also assume that all of us still retain that state, not just in our innermost and hidden self, but in our more total consciousness. Let's further assume that such a state of overall harmony is available to each of us in the daily living of our lives.

Over the centuries, many philosophers and theologians have asked the inevitable question: how did we move from this free state of oneness into the value judgments of duality? We can answer this question from a traditional scriptural interpretation of sin and misuse of free will. We can also accept the more contemporary answer that "we just forgot our true nature." We can even hypothesize that the experience of duality was intended all along, to afford us every opportunity to create our lives and our destiny as fully as possible. Whatever our answer, the exploration afforded by this question allows us to examine our personal attitudes about duality and to reopen our consciousness to the world of oneness.

Our Human Nature

In the pages that follow, I shall present a notably different interpretation of our human nature. This interpretation is unique and simple, yet expansive. It is visionary in that it allows us to see clearer opportunities, explore fresh options, create new realities, and see human life integratively - that is, it allows us to see our world through the eyes of oneness. This description shows the world of human experience in its natural and pure state.

In sharing this perspective, I intend to shed new light on the possibilities that lie dormant in our human condition, and to invite each of us into a fuller experience of our life on earth.

First, let's look at you. You are, of course, an individual person, a unique and separate being, with a special blend of emotional, physical, mental and spiritual qualities. No one else is quite like you; no other person has your special brand of human characteristics.

You are you, no one else. In this regard, you have become human in order to have a unique set of human and earthly experiences, like those of no one else. You and you alone are in charge of the direction, course and events of your life. This life is yours through and through, in every way and on every level of experience. You have come into earthly existence to be you - without question.

Thus, our human scene is made up of billions of individual persons, each one on a special and specific course, each one with a unique and personalized purpose. Our earth is a planet where we seem to specialize in individuality. Being an individual and focusing on individual fulfillment are our nature and our design, if you will.

In this current age, we are more aware than ever of the importance and beauty of our individuality. We are increasingly honoring persons, cultures, races, even civilizations for their uniqueness and individual contributions. We are more officially recognizing the beauty, greatness and dignity of every person, regardless of that person's gender, social status or skin color. We have developed values that more and more respect the equality of all people everywhere, and that embrace the innate worth of each human being.

Thus, individuality is now becoming accepted as a foundation for new beginnings, as we consciously dedicate ourselves to the creation of our future.

For us to deny the rights and/or worth of any individual, even if in the interests of achieving harmony or cooperation, is to deny the very roots of our earthly nature. Every approach to human creativity and development can begin only with a recognition of the sanctity of every person on earth; for each of us is indeed "created perfect." Each human being deserves his and her rightful status, a place of respect from which to explore the many dimensions of self. Every one of us can fulfill his or her unique human purpose only if placed in a setting wherein the individual "self" is allowed to express. We arrive at oneness through the expression of our individuality - not through its denial or suppression.

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Second, let's look at the nature of human life. Throughout the ages, we human beings have embraced the concept of duality with pure and willing hearts. We have tried hard - to grow in healthiness, to behave positively, to embrace values that are responsible, to be loving, and so on.

We have accepted this state of struggle between opposites with a willingness to do our best to make it work. We have thus fought for peace, rewarded "right" behavior, and developed educational systems that teach positive values. Indeed, we have even worked hard to heal ourselves of the stress that has resulted from these well-intentioned efforts.

Yet, rarely have even our best efforts made life-changing strides. Through the centuries, victories over evil (injustice, hurtfulness, wrongdoing, etc.) have led only to more fights, more struggles, more effort.

The human race is tired - tired of the struggle, tired of trying so hard, tired of always having to be "on guard." Not because of some weakness in our collective spirit, and not because we no longer want to do what is right, but because something deep within our consciousness is saying that life shouldn't have to be such a struggle. There's a knowing, a little voice from within the depths of each of us - let's call it the voice of oneness - that is becoming more and more audible and clear.

What is this voice expressing? First of all, I believe that it's not finding fault with any one of us, or even with our well-intentioned human systems. It's simply reminding us of what we have known from long ago, that *we're okay just as we are* and that, instead of having to prove ourselves worthy or good, we have been placed on earth for a freer, more creative experience of life.

This is the truth that lies deep within us, buried in the dust surrounding the whirlwind of duality's workload. It is an emerging truth about our basic nature and the underlying promise of our human condition.

This is the truth about you and me: we are wondrous and miraculous beings, on earth to have a dynamic and creative adventure, endowed with a power and energy for unlimited accomplishments, and filled with a drive for experiencing all life sensitively.

Let's put it another way: You and I are perfectly put together for fulfillment in this world; we are made up of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual energies so that we can experience the beauty, flow, wonder and magnificence of earthly life. We are able to embrace this life with a deep sense of personal power and meaning. And we all are driven by a deeply rooted purpose: to create, meaningfully and intentionally, as each of us is individually motivated.

Last, let's look at why duality is so integral a part of our human experience. Is duality's purpose one of condemning us into a struggle for good over evil, right over wrong, love over hate? Is it possible that our creative source actually intended that we experience pain, problems, conflicts, fears and war? Reason, as well as a tender feeling in the core of our collective human heart, leads us to answer these questions in the negative.

Duality is a means, not an end. It serves a meaningful purpose, that of being the platform on which our creativity can flourish. Our earthly system is constructed so that we need two opposing poles, so that the many possibilities of human creation can be realized. For example, male and female together create life; negative and positive poles cause electrical flow; light and darkness express as night and day. Likewise, heat and cold result in earth's four seasons; two individuals allow for meaningful interactions; and opposite emotions allow a broad range of human feeling.

I believe that duality is as much a meaningful part of our innate creation as is our basic worth. Duality daily sets the stage for the dynamic expression of our ongoing creativity. Duality separates our innate oneness into its component parts, just as a sharp knife separates a large picture into a many-pieced jigsaw puzzle.

Earthly life, then, is an expression of oneness in and through the experience of its individualized parts. The life of each part (or person) expresses the life of the whole, and each piece demonstrates the creativity and wonder of the whole. Each one of us is a dualistically arranged facet of a bigger whole, a unique piece of a gigantic puzzle picture of a bigger life. Deep within each of us lies a memory of the big picture, of our oneness.

There is no inherent conflict between the one and the separate, the whole and the part, the essence and the expression. Given our momentary perspective, they are but different views of the same picture. An isolated tree may look different from the whole forest, but its nature is one and the same. A drop of water appears to be something different from the ocean, but it has the same ingredients, the same essence. Only our interpretive perspective makes the two seem different.

It's possible, then, to conclude that there is no substantial difference between our original state of oneness and our developed state of duality. The only true difference between our unified state and our separated state is one of perspective.

Yet, perspective can make all the difference. For example, looking at a forest or a maze from above allows a more complete, objective picture than does seeing it from within. Likewise, a vision of our dualistic life through the eyes of oneness gives us a powerfully open-ended and hopeful picture, while the same vision through the eyes of duality leaves us seeing mainly limitation, partiality, pain and struggle.

Let's look at our human world, then, through the eyes of oneness.

THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE: FOUR PERSPECTIVES

THE
REALITY
PERSPECTIVE

THE
ENERGY
PERSPECTIVE

**THE HUMAN
EXPERIENCE
OF LIFE**

THE
MYTHICAL
PERSPECTIVE

THE
SPIRITUAL
PERSPECTIVE

Our Human World

The human experience is unique to each one of us. Yet, we all share a common human condition and have a similar set of inner resources. We all have access to a remarkable internal system of human strengths and processes with which we can express and fulfill ourselves. Our human creativity is supported internally by a cadre of inner mechanisms, orientations and perspectives. The following pages describe this personal and collective world of human experience.

I have personally learned that most people perceive life in one or more of our ways: as *spirit*, as *myth*, as *energy*, and as *reality*. Each of these life perspectives allows us a specific way of relating to life; together they lead us to a unified experience of life. Our fuller understanding of these four unique perspectives holds a key to a more powerful opportunity for personal and collective creativity.

We can look at ourselves and at life from a number of angles, or perspectives. I'm inviting us to a close look at four of these perspectives, four ways of viewing the world. Each of these constitutes a window through which we can see ourselves and those around us; each offers a unique opportunity for creative living.

The Spiritual Perspective

The spiritual perspective constitutes a view of human life from the viewpoint of God, source, higher power, universe, spirit - or any other name we may use to describe our purest internal essence. The spiritual perspective shows us the innately precious and beautiful self that each of us is; it uncovers the pure heart that lies beneath the behavior of every human being. It depicts us as truly "made in God's image and likeness."

Because of this spiritual perspective, we cherish other human beings, feel one with life, and experience the possibility of harmony. Through the eyes of spirituality, we see the beauty of all created life and feel the life of oneness within ourselves. We enter into a peaceful relationship with all other pieces of the created puzzle.

The Mythical Perspective

The mythical perspective embraces the world of Carl Jung's famed "collective unconscious," and views life primarily as a myth. Similar to the ways we understand our dreams, the mythical viewpoint allows us to interpret reality as a symbolic range of meaningful possibilities. Life from this mythical perspective is not necessarily seen as real - just meaningful; it is experienced more metaphorically than literally.

The poet, the dreamer and right-brained thinker live life primarily from the mythical perspective. Fairy tales, parables, dreams and imaginative thoughts all have this mythical perspective in common: they fill us with symbolic pictures, stories and "truths" for the enrichment of our experience on earth. From this picture of inner knowing, we see not the reality of life, but its illusionary quality - not its "real" truths but its symbol-rich myths. In this mythical world, we truly don't care whether something is real or not (witness our Western belief in Santa Claus, for example), simply that it serves a meaningful purpose.

Life's mythical perspective allows our spirits to express artistically, creatively, poetically, religiously and freely - without fear of being "wrong." Poetic license, freedom from moralistic judgment, and infinite possibility characterize human life when experienced mythically.

The Energy Perspective

The energy perspective focuses on the world of feelings, drives and movement. All life on earth, we are told scientifically, is made up of energy. Energy is that electromagnetic and etheric field of dynamic "life force" that is ever-flowing, moving and expressing in and through each of us. Many persons are very sensitive to the world of energy; they feel energy, sense emotions, and are deeply affected by the moods and "vibrations" of those around them.

Energy-oriented people tend to be more motivated by their intuitive feelings than by logic, more sensitive to life as it expresses in energy than as lived by reason. Energy-oriented people have a deep "feeling" for life, sensitivity to people and orientation toward their intuitive sense. Many of the world's healers, both spiritual and psychological, are more oriented to the world of energy: they sense emotions, feel their patients' pain, and take charge of healing that pain through influencing their patients' energy patterns.

Love can be considered as a dynamic force of energy. We generally allow love's moving energies to guide us in our more intimate love relationships. Thus, people in love usually are far from logical. Likewise, most energy-oriented individuals want and seek personal balance; they describe inner peace as a holistic balance of their emotional, mental, physical and spiritual energies.

The Reality Perspective

The reality perspective describes the way most modern Westerners consciously experience life. Reality incorporates the world of the conscious mind, logic, reason, linear thought and scientific method. With this perspective, we use reason and logic as our primary tools for discovery, creativity and deductive thinking. Through the eyes of reality, we perceive our world as real, tend to take life seriously, and work hard to master life's challenges. Achievement and knowledge are frequent goals in living, and practical effectiveness holds a primary place as a human value.

Because it all seems so "real" and important, we emphasize values and beliefs as an essential part of living. Being right rather than wrong, good rather than bad, successful rather than failing, and secure rather than insecure are of great value when life is viewed through the reality perspective.

Pain results primarily from this perspective, for our good vs. bad value judgments set us up to feel in conflict if and when the perceived "bad" happens to us. The world of reality is not the only focal point or basis for our human experience, but it is the one on which most modern cultures base their definitions of truth and fact. Also, this is a world of immense creative potential, for we can use reason, logic and "left-brained approaches" to discover practical, scientific and technical solutions to many questions.

These four perspectives are like windows through which we can look at the world around us. They are akin to the phenomenon of the five blind men setting out to define what an elephant is. Each blind man touched and felt a real elephant in a different place, had a unique experience of the elephant, and therefore defined it quite differently than did the other four blind men. Likewise, our human world can be experienced from more than one perspective. Specifically, we have four unique and distinct ways with which to view, experience and define the world we call human.

Everyone has all four of these life perspectives at his or her fingertips. Each of us can use any and/or all of these inner viewpoints to help us relate to life meaningfully and creatively.

Some people are born more as feelers, with energy serving as the dominant communicator of life's meaning to them. Others, seeming to ignore "reality," live more in their own world of artistic, musical, mythical or abstract experience. A third grouping of our human race is by nature more spiritually oriented, wanting only to be close to God and live by spiritual principles. A fourth group is by nature more oriented to the world of reality; they tend to use their creative talents in the "real world" pursuits of achievement, practicality and logic.

For every person there is a unique way to view and define the world, a style that is innate and natural - and *that way is the right way for that person*. Also, each of us changes and expands (to varying degrees) as he or she moves through the developmental stages of life; thus, one's dominant approach (or approaches) to life may also change.

Imagine the variety of answers you would get if you asked the following groups to define the nature of human reality: a tribe of primitive people in the deserts of Africa, a team of highly educated Western scientists, a team of astronauts circling the earth, and a monk isolated in prayer and reflection on a mountain top in the Himalayas. Of course, each one would offer a different definition, sure that his or her answer was the "correct" one.

The truth is that all perspectives are "correct," because each one serves an essential and complementary role in the overall functioning of human life. In the four-piece puzzle of human living, each piece is as important as the others. The full understanding of human life comes from the blending and harmony of each of these perspectives.

All of these dimensions of human life manifest in the inner experience of each one of us. Unlike the blind men described above, we are able to experience the world in and around us in a unique union and combination of each and every one of these perspectives.

It is my deep sense that feeling incomplete is not a natural or essential part of our heritage. I have come to believe that such a feeling comes from having cut ourselves off from one or more of these windows of vision, that is, from focusing our attention onto one or more perspectives of life to the exclusion of the others. For example, those who assert that the "reality" perspective is the only valid world of experience usually live with considerable stress and suppressed feelings. Those who live strongly in the world of energy without attention to the world of logic usually feel isolated from the rest of the world and have a hard time making sense out of their energy experiences. Spiritually oriented people who look down on the usual human ways of living rarely attain the very spiritual peace they aim for in life.

Living in all four perspectives, or quadrants, of human life has immense value for each of us. Even though each person comes into human life with a natural orientation toward one dominant perspective, we also have the capacity and the inner prompting to coordinate and ultimately to unify each of these perspectives into their innate, collective oneness. It is this oneness that constitutes the focus of this book.

Implications

There are four specific and immediate implications in this model of human experience. They relate to the following arenas of life: (1) healing; (2) judgment; (3) individual truth; and (4) collective collaboration. These implications can make a profound difference in our personal orientations as well as in the lives of every member of our human family.

(1) *Healing* is both an art and a science; it has been a part of our human traditions since our earliest beginnings. We have been historically preoccupied with and dedicated to the healing of our pain, whether psychological, physical or spiritual. This orientation to healing and health has resulted in the emergence of many kinds of healers. Specifically, healers have arisen out of every one of life's perspectives; thus, we have spiritual healers, energy healers, mythical healers, and scientific healers.

Each type of healer approaches our ills and problems based on a particular orientation to life. Spiritual healers (faith healers, priests, shamans, curanderos, etc.), for example, believe that our problems result from a feeling of separation from our ultimate Source, and thus pray for the restoration of our oneness with God. God is credited with the healing, the healer usually being perceived as the vehicle, channel or means used for the healing to take place.

Psychological healers, on the other hand, tend to be both reality-oriented (using behavioral and cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy approaches to healing) and mythically-oriented (using hypnotherapy, dream interpretation, and intrapsychic therapies).

Energy-oriented healers (chiropractors, massage therapists, reiki healers, acupuncturists, etc.) believe that imbalanced energy is either causative of or involved in our pains; they approach healing as a way of reestablishing our natural energy flow.

Medical doctors in the Western world tend to be more reality-based. They perceive the human body as an independent system or entity, curable without recourse to resources from other perspectives, and use the principles of modern science to heal us.

The important point in our healing efforts is this: every approach to healing expresses the person's (the healer's and the patient's) dominant perspective on human life. Each healing technique is valid, even necessary, because every human being will be healed based on his or her own internal orientation or system. Spiritually oriented people, for example, want to let their inner spiritual powers be the healing agent, while those who are personal-growth oriented tend to open themselves to a more psychological healing style. An energy-oriented person, for example, tends to heal through acupuncture, massage or other energy-moving procedures; while a traditional, reality-oriented person is naturally more open and responsive to scientific medicine for healing. This phenomenon is natural and normal.

It is not that any one approach to healing is more valid or "right" than any other approach. Rather, the effectiveness of any one approach depends mostly on the degree to which it corresponds to the deeper consciousness and perspective of the individual person needing healing. Healing, art or science, is rooted in a mentality. It has effectiveness and takes its particular forms based on the particular ways we think, feel, believe and trust.

In other words, no one form of healing is better than another; they are all perfect for someone at some time. In fact, it is to our credit that we have created so many approaches to healing our problems; such diversity bears testimony to the fact that we human beings are indeed deeply resourceful and capable of so many approaches for creating our world.

(2) *Judgment.* Take note of how many people you know who blatantly claim that their approach to or perspective on life is the objectively "right" one. Isn't it interesting how many of us judge others as "wrong" in their beliefs, practices or orientations, simply because their approach differs from our own?

Isn't it peculiar that we have brought condemnation into our evaluative processes, and that we pretend to believe that if we are "right," others must be "wrong?" Here we are, living on a planet filled with millions, even billions, of possible ways of being; and we judge some as inherently better than others. The irony of this phenomenon is that such condemnation has become so deeply rooted in our learned system of critical judgment, analysis and interpretation.

Let's consider, by way of contrast, a more comprehensive and open-ended view of our world. It is my personal belief that we are created as human beings for the primary purpose of creating ourselves, our lives and our worlds. Indeed, we demonstrate and express this creative purpose fully through the power of our four worlds of human experience. Out of these four unique perspectives comes a multi-faceted array of ideas, orientations, applications and approaches to life. Certainly we all share an innate capacity for judgment and evaluation, but their function is to help us to express ourselves creatively - not to find fault with the beliefs or practices of others.

Wouldn't it make more sense to use our natural gift of judgment not for the purpose of blame, but as a means of educating ourselves in the relative merits or value of a particular creation (path, belief, orientation) for ourselves, in the same way that we try on a set of clothes to see if it fits?

Creativity is a wondrous human experience; indeed, it is both a privilege and our driving force. To create ourselves, our world and our lives in a unique and individual manner is not only our right, it is our nature and destiny. Indeed, we have no choice but to be involved in, and ideally to take charge of, this creative venture and activity. To criticize our own creation or that of others, except in the context of our own personal change and growth, decreases our capacity to empower and enjoy our creative process. Rather, such judgment often leaves us feeling antagonistic, defensive and stress-filled.

(3) *Individual truth.* Note how common it is in our inner dynamics to believe that our present belief or orientation is "right"; not only right for us at that moment, but *right* - period! How many of us often believe that we have found ultimate "truth!" Why is this? Perhaps we have become so oriented to seeking truth or to finding enlightenment that we force ourselves to interpret this particular moment's version of truth as ultimate and total. While such a conviction helps us feel temporarily secure, we pay a high price for such security: bigotry, rigidity and defensiveness, to name a few of its effects.

Let's approach this from another angle. Could it be that we occupy a planet whose underlying orientation is not so much global truth but individual truth? This is not to assert that there is no absolute truth - rather, that meaningful facets of that larger truth enter into our experience at particular times, so that we can create our lives meaningfully. In other words, truth serves our creative purposes rather than the reverse.

Let's look at it this way. Isn't it possible that we on earth co-create our destiny, invent our options, discover our possibilities, and determine our future? Each of us, as a unique puzzle piece in this vast creation and a powerful player in the overall drama of human life, moves into beliefs and orientations that are appropriate for that moment's creation, that instant's unfolding. We all are moving, dynamic beings, with changing patterns of thought and belief.

Thus, truth is individual to us at a given moment, but always changes, expands and takes other forms over time. We are indeed right in our orientations, but primarily for that moment in time, and for the sake of that particular creation; then we move on to other possibilities, each one needing other aspects of truth for their unfolding. We create our beliefs because they are right - not as the ultimate truth, but as the truth of and for this meaningful moment of creative activity.

How appropriate it is, then, for us to embrace our own present truth, and at the same time to celebrate the momentary truth of every other person, culture and civilization! Imagine a world filled with human beings confident in the rightness of their own present and changing "space," while honoring the present and changing space of every other person. Such an approach comes from a fresh perspective: that of oneness.

In oneness, we see each puzzle piece - and each human being - not as a threat to other pieces, but as its own rightful and perfect part of a collaborative and unified picture. In oneness, we can view the underlying harmony in our diversity, and respect the uniqueness and worth of each part of the whole. In oneness, we are free to embrace every person for his or her special contribution, without taking anything away from our own orientation or approach.

(4) *Our Collective Collaboration.* We all live with a dynamic sense of underlying purpose and inspiration. Our shared fourfold perspective allows all of us the power and drive to create not only personally, but collaboratively. It implies a sense that all of us - our entire human family - are co-creating our world. At some deeper level of consciousness, we all feel our collective drive and orientation to create the conditions of our human world. At this deeper level of awareness, all of us come together in a collective dedication to the evolving development of our human life.

Unconsciously as well as consciously, then, we are always creating - both personally and as a "family of humankind." In this unconscious activity, we are living out a deeply-felt, underlying commission to be co-creators of our own destiny. While our conscious minds may be unaware of these deeper personal and collective dynamics, you and I are nonetheless bonded together in a deep embrace of oneness; together we are committed to the creation of a meaningful human future.

How do we interpret such a deeply co-creative dedication? A spiritually oriented person would say that such a creation is both the will and doing of God (Universe, Source, etc.). A mythically oriented person might assert that we are simply expressing the unlimited possibilities implied in our collective "field of dreams." An energy-oriented person would tend to hypothesize that this co-creative activity is the external expression of the ways we already share a unified and intentional energy. A reality-oriented person would probably credit our own human will and ingenuity.

Certainly, you and I will make our interpretations and conclusions based on our dominant perspective toward life. My personal belief is that the interpretations of all four are correct, both individually and together. Regardless of the validity of any individual perspective or interpretation, however, there is a more global reality at play. We are definitely and powerfully moved from deep within ourselves, by a force common to us all, to create life, live life, and build an ever-evolving world. We do it in a limitless fashion; we do it with a feeling of deep empowerment; and we do it together.

Now, what does all this have to do with oneness? This fourfold schema of human dynamics is not just a model for deciphering and understanding our human system of living; more important, it opens us to a new and bigger vision of ourselves. Oneness is the equivalent of being above the forest rather than within the trees; it's like being the entire human body rather than one of its organs or individual cells. Oneness is the unifying of every individual perspective we have. It is a harmonizing, integrating principle that allows us to see any one perspective from beyond its individuality, that is, in its totality.

Oneness is inherent in our personal and collective being. Perhaps back in the beginning of our time on earth, we all shared a vision of human life "through the eyes of oneness." Perhaps we saw our life as an exciting array of creative possibilities; maybe we knew innately that every one of us had a destiny to create life individually, yet in harmony with all other life. It could be that in those early days, we had a vision of ourselves as totally alive and conscious beings, in charge of bringing forth a dynamic and meaningful human adventure through our unique gifts of spirit, myth, energy, and reality.

Oneness, then, is our natural state of seeing, of vision, of knowing. It allows us to see the bigger picture, the whole puzzle, the global perspective. In addition to looking at life from any one individual perspective, we also are capable of seeing the entire world - and every person in it - through all perspectives, in an integrated and harmonized fashion. Such a vision originates in oneness. It gives each of us a sense of our greater identity and grants us an inner peace beyond that allowed by any one individual perspective. It is our nature not only to be in the forest of life, but to soar above its many dimensions and to view the forest in its totality.

I have dedicated this book to oneness because so many of us try so hard to find fulfillment (answers, truth, meaning, freedom, etc.) in and through the dominant perspective in which we naturally find ourselves, only to come up short. For example, I have seen so many spiritually oriented people seek personal freedom through either spiritual principles (values, beliefs or guidelines) or their own internal spiritual inspiration (God within, intuition or revelation), and fail. Most of them get so close - some even achieve major breakthroughs of freedom for a brief time - only to discover it fading from their grasp and to find their spiritual struggle once again an intimate part of their lives. Religious people have the same experience: fighting evil and trying to do good with determination and pure heart, only to lose the battle and feel devastated.

The same phenomenon is true of psychologically oriented persons. These growth-seeking individuals use psychotherapy as a means to personal freedom, usually make some significant strides, then resume their feelings of conflict in a lesser but persistent way. And on and on, in every other realm of human living: reality-oriented persons trying to lose weight, to stop smoking, or to indulge in a host of other addiction-changing efforts, with only short-term effects at best. Our efforts at becoming free, uncluttered, open or enlightened usually meet with only limited results. Why?

I shall answer this question not from any single perspective, but from all perspectives, integrated "through the eyes of oneness." Most of us lock and isolate ourselves into the very world of experience that is our most natural orientation and strength. For example, spiritually oriented people tend to rely exclusively on their spiritual orientations without availing themselves of the innate benefits of the other three perspectives. The same is true of those with mythical, energy or reality orientations.

By not using our *total* consciousness, or by not relying on our global "self," we ignore our most powerful attribute - our oneness. By getting lost in only one of life's themes (e.g., the reality-oriented use of will) we simultaneously and inadvertently shut ourselves off from so many other possible sources of internal power (e.g., the use of symbols, energies and spirit).

Getting lost in any one piece of our global puzzle has certain fulfillment but is not the road to total vision or full freedom. With an orientation of oneness, however, we can create options for both vision and freedom that are far beyond those of any single perspective.

Given this fact, let's examine your unique perspective and the ways you create your world. Are you a more reality-based person with little regard to the unconscious (mythical) realms of awareness? Or do you mostly "feel" your way through life, sensitively aware of the feelings, movements and energies of those around you? Do you live in the deeper intrapsychic, mystical and abstract world of ideas and consciousness? Or do you consider yourself a spiritually oriented person, mainly dedicated to the life of your inner spirit?

Whatever your natural orientation, does it serve you well? Are you fulfilled in it, without bothersome side effects and personal frustrations? Or do you feel, sense or intuit some internal invitation to incorporate other perspectives into your personal consciousness?

In addition, how do you look upon those who do not share your particular approach to life? Are they, in your view, missing something? Is there on your part a personal judgment of their way of being (believing, behaving, thinking) in life?

If you, in fact, need a larger life-view, how open are you to embracing all aspects of yourself, even those of which you are unaware? Oneness constantly invites all of us to return to our broader vision, to our bigger perspective. Your deepest consciousness of oneness may be nudging you to this bigger vision, through either external events or internal experiences.

Is your integrated self saying, "I want you to be the fullest possible creator of every meaningful aspect of your life!"? Or, perhaps, "I want you to contribute strongly to the earth on which you live!"? Or, "I have a special plan and purpose for you!"? Or, finally, "Your innate heritage of oneness is calling you home. Come!"? Whatever your personal invitation, this book will assist you in that path home, that is, back to the beauty and power of oneness.

CHAPTER 2

BEING HUMAN: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Through the eyes of oneness, humanity looks very different than when seen through the eyes of any singular perspective. This chapter leads us directly into a vision of our human state from this more integrative perspective of oneness.

Humanness. The human condition. The human race. Humankind. The family of man. We use many terms to describe our human life on earth. Most of us know what being human is from our own personal experience and from our observations of other human beings. Yet, we all seem to engage throughout our lives in a continuing search for a fuller understanding of human nature. We are driven by a desire to know what being human is all about, driven to become personally fulfilled in our human state.

Most of us, however, feel ill equipped for the job. Many of us, if the truth were told, feel somewhat like an alien being put into a human body and given human faculties, then told to have a good life on earth. In reality, we usually do a pretty good job of enduring, even mastering the human life that we are here to experience. But it often feels like hard work.

Being human was never meant to be a difficult struggle. As depicted in most of the myths and stories of creation, we were placed here primarily to enjoy this lush, verdant, nurturing planet. We were given certain creative drives, energies and orientations to allow us to discover, experience and develop ourselves and our human world.

Further, we were given certain gifts: the gift of spirit, the gift of myth, the gift of energy, and the gift of reason. These basic gifts allow us to enjoy and to create our lives in ways both pleasurable and productive. They allow us the fullest possible experience of ourselves and of the world around us. They give us multi-faceted insight and open us to the possibility of living life fully. Let's look at these gifts more specifically.

The gift of spirit allows us to experience our unity with the divine, to feel the presence of the mystical in our everyday life, and to connect with the purest life force within us. Each of us is a microcosmic expression of a larger macrocosmic reality; as such, we have within our nature the elements, albeit less visible, of that macrocosm. In more scriptural terms, each of us is made in the image and likeness of God; therefore, we carry within our basic nature the essence of God. This essence serves as our deep and inner source.

Specifically, our inner spirit is a source of pure inspiration and clear wisdom. The difference between knowledge and wisdom, we are told, is that knowledge is learned while wisdom is the innate knowing of the soul. Our spirit is our most deeply rooted source of this wisdom; it gives us a sense of belonging to something bigger, and grants us access to a higher power. It gives us knowledge that there is indeed a bigger picture to life than what is purely visible to the eyes. It permits us to seek this higher perspective in daily living, and to reach for its deeper peace in daily interactions.

Spirit is, of course, the core of our essence and being; it is our source of inspiration. From this life source, we derive our energy, live our mythical life, and create our reality. Spirit serves as a source of creative drive, power and direction. Out of its wisdom comes our natural orientation to be co-creative. The gift of spirit is our stimulus and our driving force for self-expression; it acts as our creative spark and source of feeling alive. It is our treasured resource for heightened clarity, truth and oneness.

This spirit is indeed a deeply meaningful gift to each of us; it is here for our powerful and unlimited use. Each human being has a special and individual access to and experience of this spirit. Some are moved to create regular practices and rituals around its experience, both religious (e.g. ceremonies) and personal (e.g. meditation); others are more oriented toward simply being quietly aware of its presence. Still others find the life of spirit hidden from their conscious view, even though it remains an active and underlying personal reality. For some of us, the gift of spirit is - and is meant to be - an integral and intimate part of our more conscious creation of life. For others of us, however, our spiritual activity is more designed to act covertly, allowing our conscious attention to focus on the more tangible aspects of our lives.

The gift of myth, on the other hand, opens us to the powerful world of the unconscious. This gift allows us to dream, to hope, to believe, to fantasize, and to imagine. It invites us into the world of dreams, metaphors, images and symbols. In this mythical world, we are free to imagine ourselves as the hero, the ruler, the lover, the victim or any other meaningful role. Here, we can be totally creative, without having to pass the usual test of being realistic. In fact, our mythical consciousness allows our dynamic creativity its most powerful expression and life, in an atmosphere of non-rationality and freedom. Through the use of fantasy, beliefs and dreams, we can experience every meaningful possibility of life.

Our subconscious field of mythical activity gives us the gifts of fairy tales, science fiction, poetry, music, allegories, cartoons, parables, dreams, imagery and fantasy. Because of the mythical realm, we allow the child in us to play, the visionary in us to dream, the religious nature of us to believe, and the seeker in us to engage in an unlimited world of investigation. Without the possibilities of myth, those emotionally troubled could not resolve their problems, and persons with a sense of mission could not realize their purpose.

Myth expresses not in the language of reason, but in the language of symbols. For example, fairy tales are not designed to be "real" or rational, right or wrong, sensible or practical. Rather, they are significant symbols of creative possibilities, meaningful metaphors for life's unfolding dance, expressed through the language of myth. This language of mythical thinking allows for a vast arena of non-linear thinking, including poetic, symbolic, imaginative and lyrical thought. The freedom to explore these inner realms of pictorial, magical thought brings us face-to-face with our capacity to become all that we can be.

It is because this world of myth is so important in each of us that we exempt our young children from the pressures and rules of our more real world. First, we allow them some precious years of myth-filled fantasy and carefree play, of free-flowing imagination and creative pretending. We ensure that the world of myth is fully internalized and integrated within their psyches before we introduce the world of "reality" onto that foundation. For each of us, this inner world of myth remains with us through life, taking its natural place in the deeper infrastructure of our consciousness.

As we grow into adulthood, our experience of myth gradually sinks into the subconscious regions of our awareness. As a result, many adults assume that this meaning-filled arena of mythical language is simply beyond our conscious awareness. Thus, they ignore its promptings and activity, and focus more on the perceivable world that we call reality. Regardless of the validity of this tactic, myth-deprived people are stripped of their ability to enjoy this vast realm of creative thought and possibility. Fortunately, however, this dynamic gift of myth remains alive and well in each of us, even if we relegate it to a backstage role.

The gift of energy is perhaps our most natural and "earthy" attribute. Our planet essentially functions as an energy-based system. Everything we see, feel or touch is composed of this moving force called energy. Every living cell, in both its atomic and subatomic life-force, vibrates to create its own unique energy field through which it moves and expresses.

You and I are no exceptions to this process. We also have what physicists call an electro-magnetic field of energy, or what we historically have come to call our "aura." We are energy-based, energy-operated, energy-driven, and energy-filled creatures. We are a dynamic life force, a stream of life-giving, life-expressing energy that is ever present, ever alive, and ever creative within and around us.

At the most basic level, our energy is physically, electrically, magnetically and etherically what keeps us alive. Beyond that, however, it serves to maintain our life and create us anew on a daily basis. Certain cultures even refer to the air that we breathe as a "vital life force," or creative energy. They perceive air as bringing life, health and vitality into our own energy-ready body. Persons who are more naturally oriented to feel, sense or see energy recognize what a powerful role energy plays in our personal and collective lives.

The greatest gift of energy in our lives is this: we are feeling, sensing, loving and experiencing beings. Without energy, we could have neither the sensations, pleasures or emotions that accompany our daily experiences. Without energy, you and I would feel numb, bland and unmotivated.

With this asset of life-giving energy, however, we are sexually and sensually responsive. We become emotionally charged, neurochemically alive, and mentally alert. We are capable of love and able to "feel" life in all its dimensions. Energy plays a supportive and powerful role in the ways we live out our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual life.

To feel life as well as think about it - to experience our self and our life's events more than to endure them - this is what makes the human process feel real. You and I are real, alive and experiential beings. We are on earth to "feel" every aspect of human living and to use our energy-filled powers to take charge of every facet of our lives. Energy is our tool, available to us in relatively unlimited supply; with it, we can have a full and meaningful human experience.

The gift of reason is most evident in today's technology. The human mind, repeatedly referred to as our greatest asset, is capable of astounding, even miraculous effects. Our history of inventions, scientific discoveries, creative logic and intellectual feats are testimony to the powerful role that our minds play in advancing human civilization. More and more, we are becoming aware that anything the mind can imagine can be brought into actuality in some inventive and creative manner.

The gift of reason is our most potent tool in our creation of observable reality. In effect, the real world has taken the shape it has because we have made it so - through the power of our creative mind. Those who are scientifically oriented and reality-focused tend to rely heavily on this "mind power," finding therein their most reliable ally in taking charge of their lives and projects.

Reason_ logic... real world. These words all describe the arena of our conscious experience. It is a world of reality that we are here to create. The perceivable world is our laboratory of creative experimentation and the place wherein our mythical field of dreams becomes a reality. Into this place called "real world" is expressed the inspiration of our spirit, the creative movement of our energy, and the deeper beliefs of our mythical consciousness. It is with our reason that we receive these deeper phenomena, process them, and decide how to use them in creating our reality.

The world of reality will, and ought to, dominate our conscious human focus for centuries to come. It is the culmination and expression of the activity of our spirit, our energy and our mythical consciousness. Just as the picture painted on the artist's canvas demonstrates the artist's inspiration, vision and skill, so do our real-life creations reflect the deeper life force and gifts that live within each of us.

The gift of reason is this: we possess a unique tool for creating our reality, for expressing our deeper self, and for enjoying the tangible aspects of being a human being. You and I have a precious opportunity to create a set of life circumstances that allows us to experience personal fulfillment and joy. Our spirit inspires us, our energy prompts us, and our dreams motivate us; but it is our logical selves who make the decisions and paint the actual picture on the canvas of life. In this sense, each of us is truly master of his or her destiny and captain of his or her ship.

Reason, mind, conscious control, cognitive skills. These "left-brain" qualities have been given less respect lately, only because we are discovering anew the benefits of the mythical or "right-brain." Nonetheless, they remain powerful tools - and gifts - for a full and complete enjoyment of life. As important a role as do the gifts of spirit, energy and myth play, they usually fall flat unless we use them to create a meaningful and fulfilling reality for ourselves and those around us. Creativity is our dynamic tool for living fully, and reason allows us a powerful vehicle for this creative experience.

Why do I continue to emphasize that our earth is a place of ongoing creation? Why can I seem so assured that our primary purpose here is one of meaningful creativity? If we look closely at these four gifts, it becomes instantly clear that each of them is an active, expressive and intentional part of our human nature. Each of these gifts is a deeply rooted force of self-expression, a powerful movement of inner will, and a vibrant vehicle for personal meaning. In short, each of these arenas of inner consciousness is a creative force *by its very nature*.

Our human purpose is simple: we're on earth to involve ourselves in every aspect of this world of creative activity. On this planet, everything centers around the theme of creation: our decisions, our thoughts, our activity, our inspiration and our dreams. Every facet of our experience involves a creative drive, intention, orientation and realization. From our origin as created beings to our role as co-creative engineers of life, we can't escape our creative destiny.

In every aspect of our consciousness, we experience creation's spirit, energies, myths and reality. More significantly, we are driven to involve ourselves in this ongoing act of creation that earth continues to evolve. This expressive planet invites each of us to participate in its evolving patterns of creative opportunities. We are co-creators: of ourselves, of our lives, and of our human world.

I would like to share a new philosophy of human life with you. Some of it has already been strongly implied, some not. Be assured that I am not intending these ideas as *the* philosophy or answer to all human issues. Nonetheless, I offer this approach because it so naturally opens doorways for a full and free experience of our human life and its creative opportunities. I call it a philosophy because it possesses a schema for living this life more meaningfully and proposes a cognitively arranged pattern of thinking on which to base this living.

Humanity has long sought answers to the question of its origins, nature and purpose. Through the experience of our innate oneness, the following answers have become apparent to me. I have had many opportunities to experiment with these ideas in multi-faceted interactions with people through the years, and I have experienced life-changing and powerful effects through their application. Thus, I share this "philosophy" of life with you in the spirit of my personal experience and the newfound sense of self gained by those who have been touched by it.

Let's start by looking at our beginnings from a mythical perspective. Not that myth will give us the whole story of life; but it affords us a foundational starting point. Also, remember, in the world of myth there is no concern for reality; all that matters is the meaning and value of any particular belief or story.

Any story's main points serve as allegories and symbolically rich metaphors to inspire our soul, to enrich our creative spirit, and to move us to act meaningfully in our real world. Whether they are true, literal or exact is not at issue at this point.

With these thoughts in mind, then, let's recall the story of our creation. I recount its main themes and myths so that we can grasp its underlying meaning and message. In the beginning, the world was created, whether through big bang, act of God, evolution or chance (remember, the particulars don't matter!). When creation took effect, the human species came into being as an outcome and active part of that creative process. Thus, we became an interactive and interdependent part of earth's many life forms and of their dynamic, expressive nature. We developed our own specific capacities for surviving, evolving, interrelating and self-actualizing. From the very beginnings of our human life cycle, we have participated in the developmental creation of our species, our cultures and our consciousness.

Our human race is filled with an immense creative spirit, energy, desire and will. We know and live creativity from our innermost essence to the outer limits of our expressive nature. Creative life is wrapped around our every thought, feeling, decision and behavior. We are cyclically answering questions; we create relationships, accomplish goals, and overcome challenges. We construct new philosophies, theories and scientific theories. We develop new approaches to growth, meaning and living; we challenge ourselves to ever-new inventions, discoveries and possibilities. Nothing in these creative accomplishments is ever final; each one is always being evolved, developed or created anew, even if any one of its stages remains constant for a few hundred years.

Let's put this fact into a philosophical statement regarding our human nature. *Our purpose as a human species is to live out our creative nature as fully, meaningfully and consciously as possible.*

We express this creative drive in every element and capacity of our being.

For example, spiritually we are connected to a dynamic, deep and driving urge to create our lives with purpose and meaning. In our capacity as mythical thinkers, we experience limitless powers of creative ingenuity through the use of symbols, beliefs, images and dreams. Equally powerful is our capacity to create through the movements and expressiveness of our personal energy system. Herein, we use our vibrational connection with every person and situation to co-create relationships, initiate projects, and mobilize activity. Likewise, in the more real world of human activity, we visibly create every moment of every day, with every thought we think, every decision we make, and every act we perform.

All told, we are creative beings. This is our nature, drive and purpose as human beings: to create - or, if you prefer, to co-create - every moment of life as we experience it. Fulfillment in human living comes from meaningful involvement in our earth's creative nature. Touching, feeling, knowing and interacting with every moment's creative possibilities are the natural dance and ultimate fulfillment of human living. In religious terms, this is the fulfillment of God's will: that we experience the creative life of God in and through every experience of life. In more human terms, our emotional, spiritual and intellectual fulfillment comes from a deeply personal experience of our innate beauty, power and creative energies.

Every person alive experiences this creative orientation, dynamically and movingly. Within each of us is an ever-flowing fount of creative wisdom, inspiration, drives and expression. For you and me to be fully ourselves in life, we need only embrace our creative powers, dedicate ourselves to our creative energies, and involve ourselves in the creative dance of life.

We are not just personally oriented toward creativity. In addition, we all create together. In our collective consciousness, where we live out our identity as an integrated human family, we are evolving and creating ourselves as a meaningful human race. In typically unconscious ways - inspired in spirit, moving in our collective energy, and constructed in our collective myths - we invent our future, plan our destiny, and create our options. Then we throw open the doors to the real world and involve our collective will in the tangible creation of life.

Creation - ongoing, evolving and vital: this is our human course, our life purpose, our path to fulfillment. It is through this co-creative unfolding of life that we discover meaning, purpose and direction, both personally and together. Depression or loneliness comes only when we begin to feel powerless in our creations or disconnected from our creative processes. Conflict and interpersonal pain usually arise when one person's creative orientations clash with the creative activity of another person. World conflict and wars occur when some governments or peoples create events in ways that are perceived as unfair to the creative rights of other people.

What about the fact that some people create and express themselves in ways that are in violation of the freedoms or feelings of others? In reality, our human family is free to create positively or negatively, lovingly or hatefully, altruistically or selfishly. The entire spectrum of duality is our playing field as we build our lives and our futures. This is what we traditionally call free will, or free agency. It is we ourselves, both collectively and interpersonally, who decide what principles shall guide our creative expressions. The guidelines (laws, customs, beliefs) that regulate our creative behavior change from culture to culture and from age to age. Our human family (or any culture) not only creates the means and methodology to build its future, but also collectively creates the rules that control those means. In every aspect of this process, we continue to create.

It is one thing for us to decide that one person's or culture's expressions are unfair to others and therefore to disallow and control them; it is quite another to judge and condemn that person or culture as bad. Creativity is natural; condemnation is learned. When we define another person's creations as wrong, we indirectly create an attitude of animosity, distrust and defensiveness toward that person. In so doing, we erect artificial barriers around ourselves and lessen our capacity to enjoy life's creative adventures. Dedication to our personal and collective creativity, without such judgment, opens us to the full experience of life.

Put simply, a main purpose in being a human being is to bathe in the beauties, wonders and dynamic splendors of our creative nature; to involve ourselves both as a spectator and a player in the creative game of life; and to become a powerful, conscious and dedicated creator and co-creator of our personal and collective lives on earth.

Every one of us participates in life's adventure in creativity. Even more meaningfully, each one of us creates life in an individualized way. Some people are predominantly spiritually-based creators, others more mythically creative, some more naturally oriented to creating with energy, and still others more reality-oriented in their creative endeavors.

Even spiritually oriented creators vary dramatically, some creating through religious rituals, others through internal inspiration; some through prayer, others through meditation; some focusing on good works, others on the experience of faith. While all are spiritually rooted in their approaches, each person finds meaning and expression uniquely.

Psychologically oriented persons vary just as dramatically. Some people achieve growth through changing their behavior, others by changing their way of thinking. Some find meaning by confronting early childhood traumas and fears, others by living more fully in the present. Some seek freedom through intense intrapsychic probing, others through becoming more responsible in their daily lives.

People who live more comfortably in the world of energy also differ. For example, some "feelers" are very aware of the effect of others' energies on them, while other feeling-oriented persons are more focused on their own personal impact on others. Some experience energy as magnetic vibrations, others as emotions; some as psychological pulsings, others as etheric waves of energy.

Energy healers also vary in the way they use energy in their healing arts. Some healers manipulate energies, while others claim only to "become one" with or serve as a vehicle of the person's energy. Every healer feels, sees, experiences and relates to his or her natural energy system, as well as the energy of others, in a distinct and individualized way.

Likewise, in the real world of human living, we find some people who are scientifically oriented, others who are socially oriented. In addition, there are some who find great meaning in theoretical and conceptual ideas, and others whose fulfillment is in the application of those ideas for social change. Some of us are internally motivated, while others thrive on taking direction from outside themselves. All are different, even though based in the same reality orientation.

The point in these examples is this: we are on earth not primarily to find our niche and guard it against the beliefs and creations of other human beings. Nor are we alive for the purpose of creating in one and the same way. Rather, we are earth citizens so that each and every one of us can have a full, personal, unique and individual creative experience - without unnecessary interference from others, and without our unfairly interfering with their creative journey.

Imagine, if we honored one another as creative artists of life - further, if we fully celebrated each person's unique contribution to our collective act of ongoing creation - then we could begin to experience life's creative journey as it was intended. If we were dedicated to creating a world in which we promoted diversity, appreciated differences, and respected uniqueness - in individuals, cultures, races and belief systems - imagine the powerful creative energies we would unleash for our creative use.

This is simple logic: if we truly dedicated ourselves to a meaningful creative and co-creative human experience, without undue restriction on or condemnation of any one person's specific manner of creating, we would quickly become a family characterized by mutual respect, celebration and support. This is true for each of us individually, and for all of us culturally, racially, nationally and globally.

Why haven't we yet embraced such purposeful respect for differences? My deep conviction is that it is because we have not opened ourselves fully enough to the concept and reality of *oneness*. Each of us has been so busy surviving, personally and globally, that we have forgotten to look at ourselves from above the forest of human experience. Put another way, you and I have been so preoccupied with being and protecting our own self (turf, feelings, rights, etc.) - that is, the unique piece of the puzzle that each of us is - that we haven't fully focused on the whole picture, the full puzzle. Each of us has accepted as a personal "mission statement" that he or she must create protectively rather than freely.

I propose that we are ready for this bigger perspective - that of *oneness*. Oneness constitutes the view from over the forest, the perspective of the whole puzzle, the culmination of individual vantage points. Oneness is the unified totality of our four individual perspectives and the integration of our separate states of consciousness.

The United States of Consciousness! Just as each state in colonial America maintained its own individuality yet joined in strength-producing unity with other states, so also can we do the same with each of the four perspectives within our consciousness. Just as every cell in our bodies acts independently but also interdependently with every other cell to create a unified entity that we call our "body," so also can each one of us bring our individual focuses and our creative energies into a powerful and unified consciousness. *E pluribus unum* - from the many, one! You and I are indeed capable of blending our spiritual, mythical, energy-oriented and conscious worlds of activity into a unified state: that of oneness.

It is time for oneness. This statement is true for each of us personally and for all of us collectively. If we can accept the purposefulness of our creative nature, bring our personal powers for creating into focused harmony, and then honor each other's individual orientations and efforts, we can collectively create *anything*. This human world of ours is now ready for just such a United States of Consciousness. Indeed, we have collectively prepared for it; it is our primary hope for the future. We cannot achieve a world blended in peace and international cooperation without a unifying of our individual perspectives into this consciousness of oneness.

Our human destiny is more than ever in our conscious hands. Our collective human family has created our world to date as much through unconscious as conscious levels of awareness and consensus. In this more "automatic pilot" mode, we brought about and allowed certain creations (such as war) that we would not ideally or consciously have chosen. Owning our ultimate power to create our world, however, and using the innate dynamism of oneness, we can now begin to bring this creative process more tangibly into our conscious decision-making, and become fuller creators of our own destiny.

I am convinced that we are presently developing a more conscious commitment to a world of oneness, steeped in a genuine respect for each inhabitant's worth and creative potential, committed to cooperative interchange with one another, and dedicated to a world of peace and harmony.

Such a world is not just an idealized fabrication to be imagined only in the world of myth. Rather, it is a tangible possibility for our real world precisely because our human consciousness is now ready to embrace its potential for external expression. Oneness is a consciousness whose time has come. It has lain in a corner of our unconscious being waiting for this moment of active integration into our conscious experience, just as the principles of electricity waited for centuries to be discovered and activated. Our human family is finally ready: for oneness, and for the myriad of creative possibilities it will bring. Are you ready?

CHAPTER 3

OUR HUMAN JOURNEY: A MYTHICAL PERSPECTIVE

It is often helpful to view our earthly life from the perspective of myth. The important human lessons frequently are learned not so much through linear thought as from parables, stories or movies. These mythically based stories often help us to "get" the more significant meanings of our life. Myths and fairy tales communicate our deeper beliefs and assumptions about human living.

The fairy tale of the Wizard of Oz, for example, bespeaks our underlying perception of our human condition. Dorothy, the heroine, is living happily in Kansas when a tornado whisks her and her dog Toto up to a new, strange land called Oz. Whereas Kansas was a land of oneness, harmony and peace, Dorothy found Oz to be a land of duality, struggle and fear. The good witches of the North and South vie with the bad witches of the East and West, while the inhabitants live in fear and intimidation.

Dorothy is told that, in order to return to her beloved Kansas, she would have to find the "wonderful Wizard of Oz" in the Emerald City. In this pursuit she travels along the yellow brick road, and meets three strange but significant creatures: a lion, a tin man and a scarecrow. Each of these conflict-ridden figures is struggling to find his unique personal quality. With Dorothy's help and through complex drama, each of them resolves his conflict: the lion finds courage; the tin man, love; and the scarecrow, knowledge. Armed with these newfound gifts, the four continue on to the Emerald City.

After struggling to enter the city, the team of adventurers excitedly finds the wonderful Wizard only to hear from him that, before Dorothy can leave Oz, she must find and do away with the Wicked Witch of the West. Through great fear and courage, and by overcoming obstacles and trauma, she finds her way to the evil Witch and destroys her.

Returning to the wonderful Wizard, she announces that she is now ready to return to Kansas, only to discover that the wizard himself is a fake. Amid her disappointment, however, the Wizard gives Dorothy this significant hint: you yourself have the power to get to Kansas. The good fairy appears only to support the Wizard's hint. She tells Dorothy that she has had this power from the beginning; she needs only to click the heels of her ruby slippers. She does so, awakens in Kansas and is again surrounded by family, love and security.

This innocent and endearing story speaks a powerful mythical message. Through its symbols and imaginative content, its author gives us a dramatic look at our beliefs and feelings about our journey through human life. Let's look at this fairy tale's meaning from this symbolic perspective.

Dorothy, created perfect, was enjoying the natural gifts of life (Kansas). Something unexpected happened (the tornado), and Dorothy found herself suddenly shifting from an experience of oneness to that of duality (the land of Oz), from peace to conflict (good vs. evil) and from security to fear. Still getting used to this dualistic state of affairs, Dorothy began her journey to freedom (salvation) by walking the yellow brick road (the human journey).

She soon discovered, however, that this new land had three special ingredients or qualities that must be mastered before personal freedom could be attained: *power* (courage, the lion), *love* (feeling, the tin man) and *knowledge* (a brain, the scarecrow). With these lessons learned, Dorothy gains access to God (the Wizard), who tells Dorothy that she must first win the dualistic battle of good vs. evil (kill the Wicked Witch) before being completely released (saved, freed) from this world's grasp.

Dorothy, through immense courage and risk, finally wins out over the Witch (evil, satan, darkness, confusion) and returns to God to discover the ultimate human disillusionment: we can attain freedom only by owning our own power; God won't rescue us from this world of duality.

The good news, however, is that the power to be free is within us, and its formula is simple. All we need to do is click the heels of the magical shoes that were given us for this journey in the beginning. In other words, we can awaken to the truth of our oneness (Kansas) simply by recognizing and proclaiming (clicking our heels) our innate power to experience oneness fully.

More specifically, Oz obviously symbolizes planet Earth, and its dualistic struggles represent our current human journey or process. On this planet, we deal with three central human themes or qualities: power, love and knowledge. Our purpose is to master these three human dynamics, then to declare ourselves victorious over the tugs and pulls of duality, and finally to return to our innate state of oneness.

Ironically, this "human journey" is both necessary and completely unnecessary at the same time. While most of us take this journey very seriously, the ultimate truth is that we can simply click our heels at any point in the drama, and return to our more natural state of oneness and peace. The concept that we must struggle through the human journey is only an assumption, or a dream (or, for some, a nightmare); it can be dispensed with at any moment. You and I determine the moment of truth, when we've had enough of the yellow brick road and simply decide to own our more natural state of oneness. At that point, we're free to live happily ever after.

Fairy tales, myths, stories or parables are only as real and meaningful as we choose for them to be. In addition, they are open to any individual's interpretation. Nonetheless, they contain certain truths and give us interesting feedback about the beliefs, practices and realities that we have created.

This particular tale of the Wizard of Oz bespeaks an underlying belief and insight that we all share about our human journey: it's tough, frightening and serious. Most people I have known are doing their best to master the tasks that characterize their own yellow brick road - while working, waiting and/or praying for the magical key to their fuller personal freedom or salvation.

Earth does not have to be such a serious and burdensome place, however. The human journey is not by nature a world geared toward struggle, pain or battle with evil. Granted, this is a world of duality or opposites: right and left, up and down, light and dark, positive and negative. But the value judgments we have adopted about those opposites is not inherent in our human journey; they are our own creation.

Remember, creativity is our nature, our experience and our right. What we create, even in our mind, is up to us. Struggle, pain and feelings of powerlessness have no place in the original intent or scheme of human life. Just because we have created value judgments that orient us toward an experience of struggle and pain and have incorporated them into our myths, does not mean we are permanently stuck in this mindset. We all are free to embrace a consciousness of freedom, purpose and oneness.

An underlying reason that our current fairy tales are often odious to us is that we human beings are not inherently well equipped to wage such a battle between good and evil. We do not carry within our genetic code or personal disposition the capacity for significant struggle with judgment or for the pain that accompanies it.

Humankind takes its place in this land of opposites for the express purpose of using duality's spectrum of possibilities as a basis for meaningful, creative expression, period. Not for waging battles with symbols of evil - whether these symbols be satan, negative energies, insensitive people or evil world leaders. Nor are we innately geared to wage battles with ourselves, whether in the form of temptation, addiction, traumatized "inner child," or personal conflict. We simply are not equipped with the inner tools for this kind of work.

We *are*, however, equipped for creating ourselves anew on a daily basis. We are made up of an underlying, inspiring and constant spirit that is continually motivating us to recreate ourselves and our world. We contain an innate power and urge to tackle the events and aspects of our life, not with a sense of struggle but with a feeling of achievement and challenge. Every human being is on earth to create a mosaic of his and her dynamic inner self onto the wall of life's possibilities. To do anything less denigrates our sense of worth.

There is nothing in you or me that wants, likes or is naturally oriented toward a life of struggle, pain or conflict. Why else do we spend so much energy attempting to heal our pains, resolve our conflicts, and alter our life circumstances, if not because we are naturally oriented to live creatively and freely rather than in pain?

Perpetrators and victims, saints and sinners, salvation and punishment, good and evil - these are all unnecessarily complex versions of our life in this land of opposites. And they are just that: versions, not necessary realities. Versions that arise out of an interpretation of duality that isn't innately valid. Versions that any of us can change, simply by clicking our heels.

Just as Dorothy couldn't wait to leave the land of Oz, most of us are equally eager to return to our original heritage and leave this land of perceived pain, separation and conflict. Well, our heritage is already here.

Human beings are *not* condemned to a life of pain, misery or struggle. The belief that we are so is the myth and the assumption that we have ingrained in our collective consciousness for centuries. For all this time, we have believed and acted on that myth just as committedly as did Dorothy in her journey through the trials of Oz.

Wouldn't it be ludicrous if we found out - as did Dorothy - that there is no validity or basis to this belief in struggle? What if, for example, your personal wizard or fairy godmother, or someone you would believe, announced to you today that you were as free of struggle and conflict as you yourself choose to be? Or, that you could simply click your heels three times, and your inner state of peace and oneness would return to you instantly? What if your entire consciousness instantly shifted away from a belief in struggle and embraced an orientation to live fully and create your life meaningfully? What if you actually clicked your heels and discovered oneness? What would you do?

Ironically, most of us would be in shock, or perhaps in a state of disbelief. We have dedicatedly involved ourselves in a "path" of growth - for some, a spiritual path; for others, an emotional or psychological path; for others, a cognitive path; and for many, it has been a blend of the above.

However, these paths rarely succeed in bringing us the very freedom we seek. Or, if they do, our deeper belief in the necessity of struggle moves back to center stage over time, and we again feel relegated to the journey of "the path." The message of this book is powerfully simple: there is life beyond the path; it is the life of oneness.

Our fairy tales are the rituals and means whereby we instruct our young children in the rules and guidelines of our human world. In every story or nursery rhyme, the same themes exist as in the Wizard of Oz. Through them all, we give our children this message: now that you're here, let's get clear about how we live here on our planet. I know that you come from a place and consciousness of oneness, but here we live in duality. This is a land where we feel an underlying tug between good and evil, and each of us tries hard to be good, avoid evil, and seek to get free of the struggle between them, that is, to live happily ever after. So watch out for bad guys, resist evil in any form, and look for the magic key to salvation (the prince, the kiss, the wizard, etc.).

We also use cartoons, fantasy, play, make-believe and other mythical approaches to educate our fledgling human newcomers into the "realities" of our human journey. Such fantasy-based communication is, of course, appropriate, for our children experience life's dynamics more in their mythical expressions than in their realistic mode. When they grow a little older and become more adapted to our world of reality, we employ more sophisticated tools such as moral teachings, religious and societal values, ethical principles and cultural practices to ingrain this teaching. All in all, by the time a person enters adulthood, he or she is pretty well instructed in the fine art of human living, that is, in how to walk the yellow brick road.

Given such dedicated training, how ingrained has this belief become in the depths of our deeper consciousness? Conversely stated, how free are you and I to embrace a different myth, belief or truth?

I deeply believe that we are as free as we allow ourselves to be. The profound wisdom in all our fairy tales is that it is indeed possible to live happily ever after, that we can truly return to Kansas, that the magic kiss can indeed awaken us from our spell. These myths point to a real and underlying truth, one that lies deep within us: that freedom is our nature, our heritage, our birthright, our destiny. They tell us that, if we but persist through this land of struggle, there is a free and uncluttered life beyond. Our religious beliefs in a life hereafter tell the same wisdom: that this perceived life is in truth not all there is.

Our personal experience leads us to the very same conclusions. Steeped in our treasured world of myth, our conscious desires and prayers center around concepts of freedom, salvation, peace and wholeness. We embrace these concepts as potentially attainable, from our earliest beginnings onward. Our human experience, seen from both a mythical and philosophical viewpoint, is but a stopping-off point, a temporary illusion, a transpersonal experience, and a means toward an end. The human journey as we know it, then, is but one piece of a larger puzzle, one step in a bigger process, and a veiled picture of a more perfect reality.

All perspectives and avenues of thought seem to lead to the same basic conclusion: somewhere within our grasp lies a freedom from pain, and an experience of our innate perfection. We arrive at this desirable state not through the pursuit of struggle, but by embracing that freedom in our deepest and most total consciousness. Oneness, our original state of being, is now becoming our path to the rediscovery of that very freedom.

Oneness offers us a picture of life in its bigger meaning. Oneness is both our original state of consciousness and our present magnifying glass for understanding the human journey. Through the eyes of oneness, we see beyond life's struggles to the bigger reality. For example, while the developing drama of the Wizard of Oz appeared both real and frightening, the fact (not apparent until the end of the story) is that it was all occurring in Dorothy's dream. That's right, it was a nightmare, no more real than any other dream or imagined thought. The experience called the human journey, meaningful and important as it is, is our personal and collective dream, our opportunity to imagine, create and live out our own Oz.

You are the dream-maker. This life on earth is your personal dream, your drama, your adventure. You are free to create it as you feel inwardly inclined. By design, it is not your job here to create struggle, pain or conflict - unless you want to, or feel deeply moved to do so. If given totally free choice (which, of course, is yours by nature), however, would you choose to create anything but a flowing, moving, fulfilling experience of life? Would you choose pain over adventure, conflict rather than peace, or struggle more than freedom? I doubt it.

What are we naturally inclined to make of this personal dream experience? Through the eyes of oneness, the following answer evolves. We are individual and purposeful creatures. We are driven to create our lives with our own special imprint, as a personalized contribution, as a unique "self."

This self is intended and destined for personal fulfillment through the many ways we create our life circumstances and events. We have immense freedom to create our world within and around this self, based on the personal attributes, special tools and particular gifts we uniquely bring to life. With a commitment to that self, our creative mission and our unique opportunities, the human journey quickly changes from a struggle to an experience of wonder and awe.

The human journey, then, is what we make it. None of us is intended to inherit an unalterable pattern or mold for his or her life. Rather, we are on earth to create our own mold, fashion our own pattern, and discover developmentally our own gifts and talents. We have no other option but to take charge of this creative orientation and opportunity in our own way and with our own brand of personal involvement. You and I are alive simply to forge a unique path and to create a meaningful life. Our lives are an artistic creation, an opportunity to bring our own meaningful dream into external expression. We can think, feel and motivate ourselves in whatever manner we choose. We can create our own fairy tale.

A new myth

We are creators of our own destiny, right? As such, we are totally in charge of our lives, our thinking and our consciousness at their every level of activity. More specifically, we are masters of our personal and collective myths, capable of selecting and un-selecting the very myths and beliefs that constitute the "stuff" of our creative adventures. Just as the Sabbath is here to serve us rather than the reverse, so also are our myths designed to support our creative purposes.

How appropriate it is, then, for us to take conscious charge of the very myths that are the underpinnings of our conscious beliefs. How important, for example, to change some of our myths, so that we can more fully bring our dreams into reality.

For this purpose, I would like to propose a new myth, in the form of a fairy tale. It is one that you are invited to embellish, expand or change to meet the needs of your own freer and creative experience. I have developed it as a symbolically meaningful message, and offer it to you in the spirit of your own "human journey."

Once upon a time, there lived a little girl named Eve. Eve was a bright, clear-spirited girl with a wit and charm remarkable for her age. One day, Eve was walking in her back yard when she thought she heard a distant voice speaking to her. She looked around and saw no one, but still felt a presence coming close to her. After another moment, she heard the voice again, nearer this time, seeming to call her out of herself. She felt strange, as though she were entering a world of make-believe, a world of dream.

Eve opened her eyes only to discover that she was no longer in her yard, but in a strange new land. She looked around, seeing people all around her; all of them seemed in a great hurry. Each person was scurrying about and obviously intent on getting somewhere.

Eve stopped one of them long enough to ask what was happening, where people were going, and what the big hurry was all about. A man stopped just long enough to shout to her, "The king is coming to town. Don't you know? Everyone wants to see the king. And if the king likes you, then...." The rest of his words were lost in the distance and noise as he continued on, to prepare for the king's arrival.

Eve was confused. "Why would one person's visit make such a stir and throw everyone into such a dither?" she wondered aloud. As she was pondering this thought, a passer-by stopped, peered at her inquisitively and said, "You don't live here, do you? I can tell, because you don't look like the rest of us; you're different."

Well, Eve hadn't noticed, but she *was* different from the other residents of this town. For one thing, they seemed so concerned, so serious and, well, so busy. They even seemed worried, many of them frantic. "Obviously," she thought, "these are people who live with a lot of stress."

Eve turned to the stranger and asked why these people seemed so preoccupied and strained. "What?" retorted the stranger. "Don't you know that the king is coming?"

"Yes, I do," responded Eve, "but why are people so taken with a visit by a king?"

Somewhat surprised, the stranger told Eve that the tradition in this country was that the king would pick one person every ten years to become a prince or princess in the royal court. Ten years had passed since the last person was chosen; and the villagers were hoping that this might be the time when the king would again choose someone from the local people to become royalty.

"Oh," said Eve, "I understand now." After a few seconds of troubled silence, however, she blurted out, "But it still doesn't make sense. Why don't the people simply appoint themselves princes or princesses? Why do they have to wait for someone else to give them the title of royalty?"

The stranger gasped in surprise and shock at Eve's words. "Don't you let anyone hear you talking such language here," he warned Eve sternly. "You don't understand the seriousness of what you're saying." And with these words, he quickly disappeared.

Well, Eve began wandering around the streets of the village, observing the activity, excitement and, yes, stress. She tried to stop a few people to ask them more questions, but everyone was too busy to bother with her. Eve wandered into a nearby alleyway to find shade, and she came upon a old man sitting on a low doorstep in front of a worn and dilapidated home. Impressed that she had finally found someone who was not in a hurry to get somewhere, Eve stopped and spoke to the man. "Can you tell me," she asked politely, "who is this king and why does every one of your town's people seem so eager to become part of his royal family?" The old man looked up slowly, displaying a wrinkled yet ageless face. He studied Eve for several long seconds and slowly expressed himself.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Well, my name is Eve, and I've just arrived in your village. I come from, well, from far away. I'm not sure how I got here, but I'm here, and I'm trying to figure out your people and what's going on around here."

Again, the old man studied her, stood up in slow motion and took Eve gently by the arm. "Come with me," he said softly, "and I will tell you of our history and customs, for I can see that you are a stranger and know nothing about our life in this town."

"Long ago," he began, "we were a happy people, each person taking care of himself and his family. We lived together in peace and harmony. We trusted and loved one another, as it was appropriate. Then, one day, one of us proclaimed himself lord and master over us. At first, we simply laughed and ignored his assertions of superiority. But he was determined, and bit by bit he took away lands, stole our possessions, proclaimed himself in charge of our businesses, and began to define our rights and duties. He called himself the "king" and took our riches for himself. Slowly the people accepted this state of affairs, envied his power and wealth, and began vying for privileged positions in the king's service. Most have forgotten what it was like before the king came into power. These days, all have accepted being servants of the king, and are grateful for whatever privileges he gives them."

Eve listened with interest as the old man spoke. "Why are you not hurrying about like the others?" she asked him "Are you not hoping to be chosen the king's prince?"

"Well," the old man replied with a slight smile, "I am one of the few to remember what it was like to be a prince in my own right, without title or distinction - a prince simply because I was alive. You see, I never fully accepted being a servant of another, never accepted the lesser role. That's why the king assigned me this lowly home with its squalor and disarray. I know that I shall never be chosen as his prince, for he knows that I remember."

All at once, Eve heard a din coming from the main street. The old man looked intensely and wisely at her and said, "The king is coming. Go to see him, for you will lead him to another realm."

Eve did not understand these last words, but the roar of the people's cheers from the main street caught her attention; and when she looked back to where the old man had been sitting, he was gone. She hurriedly looked around, saw him nowhere, and felt instantly drawn to return to the main street.

When she arrived at the street, she saw the people jumping, cheering and yelling shouts of joy at the prospect of seeing the king. "The king is here!" one of them yelled with a tone of great excitement and hope. As Eve looked up and down the street, she first heard then saw the royal carriage, with the king sitting on top, looking at all his subjects. She saw the king smiling, waving and indeed appearing majestic in his position of power atop the carriage. He seemed genuinely pleased by the honor given him by the people.

Eve stood toward the rear of the crowd, feeling that it was not her right to take anyone's rightful place in the front. She was still surprised that the crowd's attention and total preoccupation were so directed at one man, and more significantly at how in this process each person could forget his or her own worth. She felt both mildly angry at them and yet sorry for them at the same time.

The king's carriage drew closer, and Eve found herself gazing intently upon the royal figure on top. She felt some deep connection to him as he came into closer view. He looked around at the people, and finally his glance met Eve's as she stood quietly in the rear of the crowd. Suddenly, the king yelled, "Stop the carriage! Stop the carriage!" With his eyes still focused intently on Eve, he pointed his finger at her and said, "Bring her to me!"

Eve did not understand what was happening. She was instantly afraid that she had offended the king in some way, or that she perhaps did not belong there in the midst of his loyal subjects and would be publicly reprimanded. She slowly found everyone's gaze upon her, and she inched toward the royal carriage feeling both fear and confusion.

When Eve arrived at the foot of the carriage, the king stood up, never taking his gaze from her, and said to the people, "Who is this young one that you have brought to me this day? Did you know that I intended to choose a young prince or princess to bring into my royal court today? Your village is honored that I would choose one from among your families to live out the rest of her days in my court. Where are this girl's parents?"

Of course, no one knew Eve. Everyone looked with confusion when they saw her, for she was not a part of their village. No one spoke.

The king repeated, "Where are her parents?" He became irritated that no one spoke up. Eve finally broke the silence by saying to the king, "My name is Eve, and I am a visitor in this village. My parents are not here."

The king looked puzzled, but quickly and powerfully said to Eve, "I choose you to be in my royal family. Come into the carriage with me, and we shall ride through the rest of the village together."

"I cannot!" said Eve. At these words, the crowd gasped, for no one had ever spoken to the king with such boldness. She continued, "I cannot come with you, for I am not one of your people. You should choose one of the others, for they love and honor you; they deserve this honor, not me!"

The king stood tall, his chest expanding more powerfully and his face becoming more stern. "I have commanded you to join me," he bellowed. "No one disobeys me, no one! Join me, for I have decided to make you a princess in this realm!"

"*Realm.*" That word sounded familiar to Eve. Suddenly, she remembered the words of the old man in the alleyway, "You will lead him to another realm." Before she could focus her thoughts on this sentence, however, she found herself suddenly being moved, both by the king's guards and the people themselves, toward, then into the royal carriage. The people began to cheer, honored that one from their village, even though not one of their own people, had been chosen to be one of the king's family. Eve was somewhat bewildered by all this, not fully understanding how the hopes and dreams of these people had been realized in and through her being chosen.

Eve sat in the carriage, below the king, looking at and waving to the crowd, then waiting for the king to speak to her during the long ride back to the royal castle. After awhile, the king lowered himself to the interior level and sat across from Eve. "Do you realize what an honor I have bestowed on you today?" he asked. He looked stern yet majestic, powerful yet touchable.

Eve looked at the king straight in the eye and replied, "No, I must confess that I don't, your highness. You must know that I do not live in your realm; I am from another place, and I don't honor your customs or traditions."

The king looked both puzzled and inquisitive. "Now it is I who do not understand," he said. "If you are not from these lands, why are you here?"

Eve was afraid that he would ask just such a question, for she had no good answer for him. Nonetheless, she found these words coming from her mouth: "I came to your village quite unexpectedly. I was in my own land, living naturally when, all by seeming chance, something in my mind led me into the streets of your village."

The king lowered his head, his eyes becoming slightly glazed as he thought in silence. He looked up again at Eve, as though her words struck a distant yet intriguing chord in his consciousness. "You came here, then, through the inner workings of your mind?" he asked. Noting her sure and affirmative nod, he searched for his next question. "How could I use that same power to visit other realms?" He looked piercingly at her, indicative of his intense desire to know her answer. He appeared to perceive Eve as possessing a power that he himself did not have, a power that he wanted, a power new and mysterious to him.

Eve gathered up her courage and replied, "Well, you see, I come from a land where every person knows his or her own worth in life. There are no kings, queens or princesses. Each person is in charge of his or her own life, and we live in harmony. We do not need anyone to lord over us."

"What has that to do with my question?" the king impatiently demanded.

"That's what I'm getting to," Eve replied. "Don't you see? The secret to visiting other realms through one's mind comes from a deeper freedom, an inner freedom, a freedom of the mind. You can't believe that you have the right to be someone else's master and still be free to visit other realms in your mind. If you insist on remaining a master, or a lord, or a king, all your efforts go into supporting that belief; and your mind can't exercise other powers that lie deep in its reserves."

"Stop," said the king. "You are speaking of something that is beyond my understanding. "I am the most educated person in this kingdom; why do I not understand what you are saying to me?" Eve could tell that the king was becoming frustrated, so she sought to put him somewhat at ease.

She moved closer and looked at him caringly. "You really do not understand, do you?" she questioned. When the king replied in the negative, she continued. "I can tell that you are most intelligent, but your thoughts are rooted in your own traditions and practices. If you could see from outside your own perspective, it would be easier for you to understand." Suddenly Eve remembered the old man's words about leading the king to another realm. She suddenly understood why she had come to this land, why she was chosen to be a princess over the people of the village, why she was having this conversation.

"Somehow," she thought to herself, "I'm playing a big role here. Through my involvement this king is going to open himself to another realm, a realm of consciousness, a realm of knowing, a realm of fuller power than what he enjoys even as a king." As she was thinking, the king interrupted her.

"I want you to sit at my side in my palace. Every day I want you to talk further to me about how to change realms, how to use your mind, how to be here while existing elsewhere at the same time," he commanded.

Eve agreed. And so, from that fateful day on, a daily conversation ensued between the king and Eve. Every day Eve described her native people and the land where she lived in such harmony with others, where all people took charge of their own lives, where no one lorded over anyone else. She explained in detail how the king could open his mind to a more powerful world of possibilities if only he would loosen the mental hold he had on his own definitions of reality. Eve explained, and explained, and explained.

And one day, the king, sitting alone with her after the day's court events, said, "I understand." And he began writing, silently. He wrote into the night, with Eve sitting by his side, wondering what he was writing. At the early morning's dawning, the king raised his head, put down his pen and lifted the document he had labored over. He invited Eve to read what he had written. Eve, asking if she could read it aloud for the king's hearing also, began reading:

"To the people of my realm! A proclamation from your king is at hand. To all who read this edict, be ye advised that this day marks three new events: your regaining of your possessions, re-acceptance of your natural human rights, and re-inheritance of your sense of personal dignity and worth. It was indeed folly and fantasy for one to begin to lord over another, to believe that one person was lesser than another, to proclaim one king and another servant. Let this day mark the beginning of another chapter in our mutual history. This day begins a new epoch: one where you and I live forever in equality, respect, honor and mutual support. One in which you are in charge of yourself, creative of your life, and commissioned to honor others as you yourself are honored this day."

The document continued, repeating the themes of individual freedom and responsibility for every citizen of the king's realm. The proclamation finally came to a close, and Eve read these words:

"Be it therefore decreed that I am no longer your king but your brother! Let it resound throughout the land that every person is king of himself and queen of herself, and that each person is lord and master of his and her own realm. I hereby resign as king, accepting my new role as opener of minds. It is hereby decreed that each of us is indeed unique in his and her life and person, and that this land shall have its glory no longer because of a monarch's power, but because of the power of each and every person who lives here!"

The king looked at Eve, nodded his head in agreement with what he had just heard, and took the scroll back into his hands. "Tomorrow," he said humbly, "this edict will go forth, and I shall begin my new job. At last, I feel peace."

And so it happened. The king resigned, the people took back their power, and Eve returned to her own back yard, as quickly and easily as she had left it. And, of course, everyone involved lived happily ever after.

While the symbols in this story speak for themselves, I would like to offer the following interpretive points. This fairy tale first of all repeats the theme that we are here on earth temporarily, as though visiting from another realm, in this instance, a realm of consciousness. Eve (our symbolic name for woman), portrayed as a little girl to represent clarity and simplicity of thought, was chosen as our heroine because it is appropriate that feminine consciousness be the influential vehicle for leading humankind back to its fuller heritage.

Eve remembers what the people of the village, except for the old man, have forgotten: that each of us is created perfect and deserves the right to create his and her own life. She comes from a realm of this clear awareness, and brings this pure truth into the "real life" beliefs and practices of another realm. The king-dominated realm of powerless people represents the "human journey" that we described earlier in this chapter. Eve's greatest contribution to this realm is the insight that each person is created with "certain inalienable rights: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Yet, the bigger, more gripping message is that we can open to greater creations and possibilities only when we are willing to let go of narrower perspectives, beliefs and orientations. The king did exactly that, both successfully and committedly, in his personal dedication to grasp that "something greater."

What does this mythical story have to do with our "human journey?" Frankly, it constitutes an appeal to your and my personal belief that we must remain in the consciousness of Oz, or as less-empowered villagers in the king's realm. This fairy tale speaks the more underlying truth that we are free in our created nature to live in the human realm *with our full power*. Note that Eve never gave up her personal awareness, power or right to be in charge of her own thought or life. She maintained her right as a visitor to this realm (as we also are) to be who she is at all times, regardless of the wishes or pressures of anyone else. You and I have exactly that same right: to be our natural, creative, expressive and powerful selves at all times, in every circumstance of life and in our own personalized way, while here on earth.

Let's look, then, at *your* human journey. How deeply do you believe that you are locked, even subtly, into a land of struggle, pain or conflict? Conversely, how fully do you experience your own invitation to remember your created beauty and to return to your original state of personal freedom? In your approach to your personal growth, for example, how much do you believe that you have a right to, can, and (better yet) definitely will break the seeming spell of struggle? To what degree are you actually living your natural state of creative power right here and now?

These questions point us to a new consideration. Traditionally, we human beings have placed a barrier between our inner world of myth and our outer world of reality. Most of us have allowed ourselves untold dreams and imagined greatness, but for the most part have kept these potent images confined to the world of the unconscious. We stop them short, allowing them their full and intended life in our world of mythical imagination, but refusing to allow their intended flow into the world of real and expressive life experience. Only in isolated instances - for example, in miracles, instantaneous personal transformation or dramatic and unscientific healing - have we historically allowed the myths and beliefs of our unconscious world to express strongly into the world of reality.

More and more, however, these two worlds of consciousness are coming together. Our modern technological advances in science, space and telecommunications, for example, were but unrealistic dreams a few decades ago, but are now an integral and growing part of our real world. We are breaking down barriers between all worlds, external and internal. In fact, myth and fact are speaking more of a common language and entering a more active partnership in every arena of human living.

There is no inherent barrier between the real world and the mythical world of thought and awareness. These two worlds are by nature interactive and mutually supportive. In fact, there need be no significant distinction between any perspective or any world of consciousness. Oneness is a natural unifying principle and bonding process. We are presently at a stage of human development wherein we can bring, and indeed are harmonizing, all our separate worlds into a oneness. Our consciousness of the human journey is changing in so many perspectives, and specifically as we leap from a belief in struggle to an embrace of freedom. Oneness is becoming the integrative dynamic of human consciousness and life - now.

Many books deal with the *process* of getting free, both personally and interpersonally. They speak to the issue of procedures, rituals, techniques and approaches whereby one can accelerate the human journey (the yellow brick road) and become free. I do not advocate any process other than the simple realization and embrace of our already free and creative nature. This book is about you and me as naturally and currently free beings, not as persons needing practices and processes to free ourselves from a believed-in state of pain. While I respect our traditional efforts toward growth and personal freedom, I have learned that these approaches have served us both as a blessing and as a curse. In other words, as helpful as they have been, we have also inherited their ingrained side effects - hard work, slow and labored results, fatigue and, perhaps more important, the feeling that there's so much more road ahead.

Through the eyes of oneness, I see a world ready to stop working so hard to return to Kansas. Rather, in this world we simply click our memory-filled heels and wake up in our united state of free consciousness. In this modern world of consciousness, we recognize more and more that there is no way, no journey; there is simply owning who we are, and creating our lives as fully powerful selves.

When enough of us simply recognize the truth of our creative nature, we will be in a position to create a world of our own liking. Unlike the villagers in this newer fairy tale, we don't have to wait for the king to decree us free; we are already free to create. Any concept of servitude or powerlessness on our part is simply an illusion. So I ask you to examine the ways you look at, live in and approach your personal path to growth, freedom, salvation or *nirvana*. Look at the degree of your legitimate and deserved success, then also ask yourself why you aren't "there" (saved, free, etc.) more or all of the time.

I frequently chide Christians for psychologically refusing to accept the very experience of salvation and joy that is promised in their acceptance of Christ. I point out to them the Christian theme: that simply by believing in Jesus they are saved, the old law is dead, and they are *totally* free to live according to the new law of love and freedom. Then I ask, "How many of you feel *that* free? How much freedom do you allow in your life? How much does your Christ-based love inspire you to create wonders in your life?" Many of them indicate that, while they would like to embrace the theory and truth of their Christian faith, they often spend their lives struggling in a death duel with satan, temptation or some other perceived evil. My point is simply this: if you're saved, then you're saved - period!

I also frequently lean hard on those who are more spiritually oriented or have embraced a pure spiritual "path," that is, those whose life is inspired by "God-within." Most spiritually directed people I have known will preach the belief that they are created perfect and that they are humanly alive to reflect the beauty, glory and freedom of God. Yet, their daily life is filled with efforts at removing personal blocks, healing pain, and pursuing spiritual growth. Their spiritual path is often one of struggle rather than freedom. Again, their beliefs and their daily experience don't coincide. I often ask them, "How can you profess that you are free, then continue to own powerlessness?" In other words, if we're free, we're free - period.

I frequently perform the same ritual of "if you've resolved the conflict, why is it still here?" with psychologically oriented persons. Yet, generally I find this group's processes to be more consistent with their underlying beliefs. Specifically, rather than espousing total freedom, they define growth as a difficult and arduous process that usually promises not total freedom, but better coping skills. Their consequent lack of freedom is a genuine reflection of this belief in the necessity of struggle. Nonetheless, in any and all of these three orientations I am firmly convinced that it does not have to be so difficult. There is a way out, *if we* want to take it.

Oneness is the key. As human beings we live in a world of duality, differences and opposites. Yet, side by side with duality, we also are linked, bonded, interconnected and united in a personal and collective way. Oneness is the integrative phenomenon that unites us internally, interpersonally and globally.

All differences carry with them a unifying quality, and all separated parts have an innate capacity for integration. With a personal consciousness of oneness, myth becomes intermeshed with reality, spirit with energy, and so forth, until all parts come together to serve the whole. When our consciousness is integrated, we can create more fully, flexibly and powerfully. When our four individual perspectives are unified and focused, the human journey becomes easy.

The bottom line is this. *The human journey is exactly what we make it.* Each of us is gifted from deep within with an innate knowing of his or her power and freedom to create. No matter how much we may have numbed this awareness or covered it over with other beliefs or issues, it is an awareness that will not go away.

You are a creator, plain and simple. Your capacity to create your self and your life never diminishes; rather, it is a given and a constant in your life. Further, your drive and capacity to create grows greater as your life evolves. You, creator of life, are designed and built to make of every moment a meaningful expression. If your conscious mind is bogged down with issues involving struggle, you will undoubtedly use your creative energies to "resolve conflict." If, on the other hand, your mind is alive to the challenge and opportunities of your creative role, then you are free to create with freedom, ingenuity and, better yet, personal enjoyment.

Creating life - whether spiritually, mythically, with energy or in external reality - is a glorious and awe-inspiring occupation. It is the one single job in the human scene that innately feels good, gives joy, and is exciting to our every experience. Creating - meaningfully, freely and joyfully - is the essence of our human journey; and all other definitions of our human purpose are supportive of and subservient to this singular design for earthly living. Creating our life, in its every significant phase, gives consistent vent to our deepest and most dynamic drive for self-expression. Creativity is the central theme of our life.

Why not, then, begin a new human journey? We don't have to create according to yesterday's style, nor do we need to be loyal to yesteryear's creations. The human journey is created anew every day, every moment. You and I are free - already - to embrace our creative natures and to build a dynamic future. Not just personally, but collectively as well. Our human race is on the verge of coming together to create a new sense of human family. The collective consciousness of this family is already writing the blueprint for a different and dynamic 21st century. With a perspective of oneness at the helm of this consciousness, we are free to eliminate struggle and pain from our future and to create it any way we want. Indeed, we won't have it any other way.

Let's look afresh at our human journey and realize that each and every one of us has the innate right, tools and freedom to create his or her own life journey. Each person's world is as individualized and honorable as another's; each person's right to a unique expression of self deserves to be supported. In such a context, our human journey can be the dynamic, powerful and exciting experience it was meant to be. Why not? We deserve it. We need it.

CHAPTER 4

CREATIVITY RE-EXPRESSED

Creativity, the most basic driving force of earthly life, is at the very roots of our collective being. Every human being resonates with creative power - every day, every hour. Our thoughts, feelings and dreams fill us with their creative inspiration in both our sleeping and waking hours.

Creativity, the innermost fiber of our collective consciousness, reaches out to every human being to express its multifold characteristics. Our earth is a vast field of creative possibilities for the creative activities of those who occupy its space. Every person, for example, is a composite of powerful creative energies and unlimited creative potential.

Yet, each of us is a *unique* creator. Your brand of expression is like no one else's; your style of creating is particular to you; your source of creative inspiration is specially designed for you. No one else is like you in his or her dreams, drives or desires. You - and you alone - are the specialist and artist of your distinctive life. To forge your destiny, you come equipped with special and individual talents and capabilities.

Isn't it interesting, even ironic, that so many of our societies tend to promote a code of behavior and belief applicable to all its citizens? In a world where each person is unique, with individual patterns for creative thinking, decision making and behaving, it seems somewhat presumptuous for any person, group or nation to imply that everyone "should" believe or behave the same way. It seems to me that, while we all share the same human identity and overall nature, our human focus centers not on our sameness, but on our individual differences. In fact, it is our human nature to be dedicated to the individual fulfillment of each and every person.

I remember the moment I became clear about the central place that each individual holds in the world of human dynamics. I had been thinking long and hard about the meaning of human life, when the following "formula" simply jumped into my observing mind:

- ❑ The *focus* of life on earth is: *individuality*;
- ❑ The *tools* of human life are: *power, love*
and
consciousness;
- ❑ The *purpose* of earthly life is: *to create*.

Let's expand on this formula. Our collective focus is on the *individual* person. Each of us plays a unique role in the developing life of our planet, while our planet is designed to support the life and activity of each person. Individuality, therefore, constitutes our focus - the important foundation on which we build the meaning, unfolding and fulfillment of human life.

For this purpose, each individual is equipped with three main ingredients, tools or qualities with which to build a life and attain personal fulfillment: a sense of personal *power*, a dynamic energy of *love*, and an almost limitless *consciousness*. These tools constitute the basic building blocks of life; they form a cadre of personal talents and skills that allow us to fulfill our individual purposes.

Finally, the purpose, meaning and driving force in our human journey is that of *creating*: creating life, meaning and activity.

Let's look at this more closely. Keep in mind that the purpose of everything on earth is one of creative expression. Only through creative thought and behavior does each of us find personal fulfillment and joy. And only when we all are expressing our creative nature is it possible for us to experience our collective fulfillment as a unified human family.

Individuality is the cornerstone of human living. While in the bigger scheme of things we all are undeniably one, earth can literally be labeled the planet of individuality. This dimension of living is one where unity is experienced in its diversity, where the whole gives way to its component parts, and where oneness expresses through duality. This is indeed the world of differences, separateness and uniqueness.

We live our lives mostly aware of our own individual dynamics. We look for personal fulfillment in our every interaction, and we find meaning through a unique and personalized involvement with others. Yet, even in our relatedness to those around us, we experience others and ourselves in a personal and individual way. Our fulfillment as a person is a major aspect of our human experience. Indeed, it is at the core of our search for life's meaning and fulfillment.

Individuality, then, is our core focus on earth, our starting point for the ultimate human experience. It is each of us - as an individual, as a person - who is the artist, creator and sculptor of life. We can accomplish innumerable feats of creative expression, simply because we are designed as individuals to create. We are made with all the ingredients necessary to be dynamically alive and creatively free.

What are these ingredients? Above, I have listed three main qualities that serve us as an integral part of our personal and collective human experience: power, love and consciousness.

Remember the Wizard of Oz fairy tale? In it, Dorothy's journey was characterized by three phenomena: a lion seeking courage (power); a tin man striving for love (feeling, emotion); and a scarecrow desiring consciousness (knowledge, wisdom). These three experiences - power, love and consciousness - are the tools that help us drive meaningfully down the yellow brick road of the human experience.

Power is a basic, deep, stabilizing energy. It constitutes our most underlying awareness of our personal strength and courage. Power is that innermost feeling of connectedness to our internal stability, sureness and rootedness. It is our feeling of oneness with our deepest sense of self. Without this sense of power, each of us is like a boat without sails, oars or engine.

With a feeling of personal power, however, we feel confident and energized. Power allows us to walk life's paths with a sense of adventure, romance and dedication. It gives us that inner direction and life force that inspire us to meaningful expression and action.

Each person feels his or her power in a special way. For some of us, it is a quiet and solid inner sense; for others, a more assertive and expressive force. For some, it is their dominant personal tool; while others might experience love or some other personal characteristic as more dominant.

Each person relates to power individually. For example, some people are driven to achieve success or fortune; others are more oriented to attain positions of prestige or influence. Still others are propelled to take charge of their internal self, with little emphasis on external achievement. For all of these achievers, a dynamic power is essential for them to fulfill their objective.

Love, on the other hand, is a compelling energy of feeling and sensitivity. Love allows us to experience life's energies of intimacy and passion. It leads us to feel a deep oneness with ourselves, with another, with life, with God. This love-inspired oneness is more experiential than cognitive, more feeling than thinking, more sensitive than rational.

Energies are the life stream of us all; yet they are felt, experienced and embraced by each of us in a unique and personalized manner. You love, for example, as no one else does; you feel another's emotions very individually; and you experience love's energies, depths, force and invitations in your own unique way. One person's style of loving, for example, may be to give; another might express loving by fostering independence in the loved one. Some people's love orientations are by nature more self-focused, while others more naturally place their loving attentions on another person.

Love is a driving force in every human being. Indeed, no one escapes life without spending at least some significant amount of his or her life energies wrapped in the experience of love. Without a meaningful experience of love, we tend to feel empty or lifeless; on the other hand, when we are filled with love's dynamic energies, we feel alive and beautiful.

Consciousness is the third dynamic ingredient in our lives. By consciousness, I refer to our inner drive to learn, to know, to understand. Beyond giving us knowledge, consciousness also encompasses our need to seek wisdom and to be enlightened.

While we all are naturally driven to learn and grow in knowledge, each of us builds consciousness in a totally individual manner. Some are geared to learn life's lessons through personal experience, while others learn well through observation or schooling. Many people learn visually, some auditorially, and others kinesthetically. Some gain knowledge and wisdom from the vast storehouse and classroom of life, while others gain life's lessons from their own personal experiences and processes. Yet, we all are geared to learn - this is the ingredient of consciousness. No matter what our individual style, we are all learners, gatherers of information, seekers of truth, and experiencers of wisdom.

These three drives and qualities - power, love and consciousness - are our personal tools for creating our world. Each person alive is in charge of, even driven toward, a dynamic process of establishing a meaningful "self" with these three tools - then moved beyond the boundaries of that self to use these same tools interpersonally.

Notice the frequency of these three themes in our biblical writings, history books, novels and virtually every kind of literature. Within the Christian tradition, for example, these three human qualities are reflected in our interpretation of God in whose image and likeness we are reportedly created: Father (power), Son (love) and Spirit (truth, light, wisdom).

In addition, our collective history is characterized by the contrasting and competing influences of these three qualities: power, demonstrated in our achievements, conquests, governments, etc.; love, shown in our efforts to respond to the needs of the disadvantaged, assure the rights of individuals, exhibit sympathy for the wronged, etc.; and consciousness, displayed in the Bill of Rights, the philosophical foundations of governmental systems, national and religious ideologies, etc.

In a similar vein, all of us are personally oriented toward harmony among these three inner realities. Each of us experiences power, love and consciousness in a unique pattern and blend. Some of us, for example, are more predisposed to achievement (power), while others are moved primarily by relationships (love), and still others live much more fully in the world of thought (consciousness). Each person carries within his or her psyche an individualized combination and mixture of these dynamic tools. Our individuality is as present in our experience of these important ingredients as it is in every other aspect of human living. No one uses these tools in the same way; we all combine them in unique ways, so that we can best fulfill our personal goals and purposes in life.

What are these goals and *purposes*? To what end does each person experience these dominant tools for human living? Simply put, to create. To express. To fulfill each person's innermost formula or blueprint for life in the arena of external expression.

Some people's compelling purpose is one of accomplishment; these individuals usually channel love and consciousness into their more driving force of power, for the sake of succeeding or accomplishing.

For others, their innermost self is primarily oriented toward learning; they tend to focus their dynamic threefold qualities in ways that enhance and prioritize the learning potential of every moment. They use their energies of love and power not primarily for intimacy or achievement, but to fuel their pursuit of learning.

Still others - life's lovers - are dominated by an inner urge to express love; for them, the energies available for personal accomplishment and learning are often sublimated into creating relationships and intimacy.

At this point, let's look at you. Examine yourself in light of your own unique combination of these threefold energies and tools for living. What is your personalized pattern in using and blending these three qualities of life? Are you, for example, more driven to learn than to love? More motivated by interpersonal closeness than by achievement? More excited by personal accomplishment than by theories or intimacy? More inner directed than other directed?

Second, how do you interpret the fact that you are oriented, motivated and driven as you are? Do you accept it as the most appropriate design and set-up for fulfilling your personal purposes in life? Or do you judge your unique orientation to these tools as imbalanced or unhealthy, as some theories of human personality might suggest?

I believe that most of us are overcritical of our unique make-up, personality and orientations - simply because we don't understand that we are made up as we are for a purpose. Rather than evaluating yourself as wrong or disordered, how about accepting that your personal style for being strong, loving and knowing is ingrained in you because this particular style best facilitates *your unique way of creating your life*?

Your personal acceptance of your own style for experiencing power, love and consciousness determines how fully you will be able to accomplish your dreams, fulfill your creative drives, and feel personally at peace

After many years of helping people who experience unhappiness and personal problems, I have found that most of them share a common theme - they have learned some external principle of behavior or healthiness (whether psychological, religious, societal or familial) rather than having become aware of their personal style, orientations and inner inspiration for living life. As a result, they become disconnected from their own inner wisdom, and feel understandably empty.

In contrast, imagine what it would be like if every one of us would become inner focused long enough to get clear about his and her own strengths, drives and qualities. The result would, by necessity, be a freer, more creative and more fulfilled experience for us all.

Power, love and consciousness - your primary tools - are dynamic, active, even exceptional energies for living and creating your human life. Let's look again at each of these invaluable qualities, in more detail.

Power is an energy that flows through and motivates us in ways unique and appropriate to who we are. It both stems from our internal depths and functions as a part of our external expression. We all are powerful, by nature. Whether we feel power as a dynamic and driving force or experience it as a quiet serenity, it is ever present in our every experience of living. Power is by its very nature a creative force, and each of us is a unique vehicle through whom that creative activity takes place.

How each of us uses this power determines both how successful we are in our external endeavors and how in charge of our personal lives we feel. How many people, though, do not notice their personal power and strength in the daily activities of their lives? Most of us not only don't notice the energizing role that power plays in our lives; we often assume that we are less powerful creators of life, sometimes even victims of circumstance.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Every one of us is immensely powerful. If we don't feel our power, it is simply because we are misinterpreting its dynamic presence. Power lives within each of us. It is always active and expressive, though it often waits for us to notice and embrace its limitless possibilities. Remember the lion in our now familiar fairy tale? He found the courage that had always been present within him once he took the time and effort to look for it.

The same is true with us. We can notice or ignore, embrace or deny, cherish or decry our dynamic tool of power. Nonetheless, we are inherently powerful creatures. Further, our power is ever creative, expressive and inviting us to own its magical potential. When we become aware and involved participants in power's expressive energies, our lives begin to change. Life's prior dilemmas become challenges, and we feel alive.

Love also lives as a dynamic force within each of us. While each person experiences this loving energy in an individualized fashion, every one of us loves. Some love emotionally, others more cerebrally. Some feel and express love as a tender sentiment, others experience those same feelings in a "tough love" fashion. The style of love's dynamics within each one of us is unique and personal, but the fact remains that every one of us is a love-motivated, love-energized and love-oriented person.

As such, we feel emotions, experience sensations, and are driven by energies. For example, all of us are internally moved by the sensuous, feeling energies of our earth. We breathe in the earth's life-giving energy; we feel the sexual, sensual pulses of this planet's vibrations; and we become sensitive to the beauty of the Nature that we witness. These are but a few of love's many-sided capacities.

The energies of love direct our interpersonal relationships, and move us to connect with others emotionally. Love is a basic and dynamic driving force in you and me, as is power; as such, it constitutes a meaningful and moving expression of our indwelling creative nature.

Consciousness constitutes our primary force in making sense of our world. Philosophers, theologians, educators, sociologists, psychologists, scientists and other "experts" from varied fields of knowledge continually offer us explanations of the world around and within us. These teachers' theories enlighten us in ways that bring our minds alive, broaden our understanding, and fulfill our need to know. Our cognitive, psychological and intellectual capabilities are important and substantive tools in our perennial search for meaning and truth.

We develop our consciousness in a myriad of ways through every developmental stage of life. As we move through life's many phases, we all experience an ongoing quest to broaden our grasp of life and to understand more fully the nature, meaning and dynamics of the human experience. From a baby's tasting of everything within its grasp to an older person's experiencing the meaning of approaching death, we all are driven to know and understand more fully the whats and whys of our personal and collective experience.

Again, everyone experiences a unique approach to consciousness. Some people feel driven to develop and express theories or "truths," while others seek only enough knowledge to lead a meaningful personal life. Some seek answers to the mystery of the universe, and others are oriented to understand the practical, concrete realities of daily living. Each person's consciousness is as singular and unparalleled as is his or her personality. Yet how important and powerful a force consciousness is in each and every one of us!

These three tools for living life - power, love and consciousness - are dynamic and moving forces in everyone's life. Let's look at these concepts as they have moved you through your own life. From birth, you were by nature motivated to understand your world of experience (consciousness). You reached out to your parent(s) for love, experienced that love deeply, and gave it back to them. Building on these feelings of love, you began to feel your inner power, and allowed that power to express creatively into your life experiences.

With each step, you increased your understanding, your feelings of love, and your sense of personal power, as you uniquely used these tools to build and create your life. Power, love and consciousness - your three magical tools for "doing" the human experience creatively, meaningfully and fully.

A final word about life's purpose and meaning. Many philosophies and theologies have asserted throughout the past several years that the purpose of human life is to learn lessons. For example, learning lessons related to personal growth or spiritual truths have been held out as a dominant reason for being human. These philosophical approaches place their primary focus on the perspective of "consciousness" (that is, learning) in defining life's purposes, though they often stress the importance of learning lessons of love and personal power.

Each person, however, is a unique individual, and therefore has his or her particular purposes and orientations toward life. Some are naturally oriented toward learning lessons, while for others, loving or achieving may be more important. For example, a person who is naturally more oriented toward power might define life's purpose in terms of achievement, self-expression, personal accomplishment and success. Likewise, one more oriented toward love would probably find meaning and fulfillment not primarily in learning lessons, but in an active experience of intimacy, giving and sacrifice. Each of us sees the human experience, and therefore finds fulfillment, through the eyes of his or her own personal and natural orientations.

We can look at life's purpose from the experience of the fabled five blind men feeling the elephant. The man feeling the back leg defines the elephant one way; the man feeling the ear describes it quite another way, and so on. Each is accurate, each appropriate, each correct; but each person's orientations are different, unique and purposeful.

I remember a few years ago telling a respected friend that I was thinking of writing a book on the purpose of human life. He asked me to describe to him what I saw the purpose of life to be. I responded that it seemed to me that there was little value in defining an overall purpose to which we all conformed, but rather that each person forged and expressed a personal and specialized purpose. My friend agreed, adding that he had often tried to apply the definitions of our human purpose to every human being, to no avail.

Let's apply this concept to you. You experience life as an individual, from the time of your birth to the moment of death. While you originate from a state of oneness and are destined to return to that same oneness, from the start of your human life you individuate into a separate and unique consciousness called person. A baby, it has been found, does not differentiate itself from all life when born. In fact, it takes some time for the baby to realize that it is actually an entity separate from its mother. A newborn baby experiences only oneness. Once this individuation happens, however, the young child focuses more and more on self, in an ever-evolving and expanding pattern of power-love-consciousness experiences.

From early on, then, you create your life as an individual, for the sake of exploring and expressing your singular, personalized purpose in living. That purpose, powerfully and actively present in you at every moment, motivates you to choose behaviors, beliefs and feelings that are uniquely meaningful to you. Your every thought, interaction and accomplishment constitute your personal creative experience, meaningful to you because they enhance your unique reason for being alive.

Your life, then, is your personal adventure in and through the intricate world of human possibilities. You are on a human journey unlike that of anyone else, and you are ever discovering unique ways in which to create yourself, your life and your future. Your particular beauty lies in the fact that no one else is like you, no one else has your special blend of creative talents, and no one else can create reality as you create it.

No one can validly criticize your unique experience because it's yours, not theirs. While others certainly have a right to judge whether your creations are infringing on their rights, and to limit your behavior on that basis, you are otherwise the absolute lord of your creations and master of your particular destiny.

You and you alone are the person called you. Nothing can duplicate you, and nobody can imitate you. You combine the basic human ingredients of power, love and consciousness in your own special way. You create and experience life in a totally personalized manner.

From the eyes of oneness, we can see the meaning and wisdom of this arrangement. The design in our being so unique is purposeful: so that each person can experience the many possibilities of earthly life in a special way. To believe, then, that we should think alike, behave alike, or create alike is to ignore the most basic human phenomenon: the reality and importance of our individuality. To assume that everyone should love in the same manner, decide in the same way, or express in the same style is out of harmony with the realities of our created and creative nature.

Why do some people believe that we all should be, believe and behave the same way? In my opinion, it is because they look at others as imagined reproductions of themselves. They assume, therefore, that their own particular beliefs, values and orientations should apply to everyone else just as surely as to themselves. The irony of this situation is that these people most probably are expressing their own creative nature quite harmoniously. For them to assume, however, that their system would, or even could, work for others is most unrealistic. Through the eyes of oneness, we see clearly the beauty, meaning and even perfection of each person's individuality.

The philosophy of life called oneness, then, postulates that each person is a unique individual, by design; and that each human being creates life distinctly and originally, by design. Oneness invites us to use our innate gifts of power, love and consciousness as personalized tools and gifts to forge our own special life, by design; it implies that the overall purpose of life - by design - is that each of us take charge of creating a meaningful and fulfilling spectrum of life experiences.

In this approach to life, the sanctity and value of our individual nature and purpose is assured. With this orientation, there is no room for value judgments of persons, only of the relative effects of anyone's behavior on others. This philosophy of human living underscores the importance of each person's having certain freedoms of personal expression, such as those freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States of America. It invites our societies to unburden themselves of any rigidity in their learned value judgments. It motivates us to support the opportunities of people to create their lives effectively and fully.

Imagine a society whose peoples are freed of the need to judge the theoretical or moral rightness and wrongness of each of its citizens! Imagine the freedom implied for each person's creative spirit, when he or she no longer has to "worry" about being condemned as wrong or as failing! And imagine a world dedicated to enhancing the creative process for each of its members as individuals as well as for our entire human family as a whole!

CHAPTER 5

WHAT TO CREATE?

If we did, in fact, create a world free of such value judgments, what would we create in it? If we did respect each other's freedom to express meaningfully, what would each of us express? What would a world filled with freely chosen creations look like? This chapter invites us to a fascinating view of just such a creation, seen from the perspective of oneness.

Oneness is a unique consciousness that allows us an overview, a more global perspective. Since a person with a mentality of oneness is able to see beyond (as well as into) his or her own personal experience, that person is free to evaluate objectively the relative merits of all approaches to living. Such a person is able to see the beauty and meaning of every person and situation, without having to judge anything as bad, negative or unfortunate.

Ironically, it is not at all necessary to judge the morality of anyone's behavior. Moral value judgments serve mainly to set the stage for distrust and condemnation of a person, a behavior or an event. As such, it drains the judge's as well as the judged's energies, and leads to feelings of hurt and pain between both. Judging others (nations, cultures, genders, etc.) establishes a tangible barrier to meaningful communication and effective cooperation. Absence of such judgments, however, allows us to open ourselves to whatever is valid in the other person's field of experience, and to interact with that person freely and creatively.

The global overview allowed by oneness grants us a special view of what is possible in our human and earthly scene. In particular, it shows us a picture of ourselves and our potential from the perspective of our more natural and inherently free state. From this clear vantage point, the following four-fold picture of our open-ended future evolves.

First, everyone would feel more free to be expressive, within a broad framework of acceptability, as a full and contributing member of a larger society (family, group, nation, race).

Second, each nationality, culture or sub-group on earth would feel more interconnected with other such groups around them, without losing anything of its own uniqueness.

Third, the absence of previous needs to protect oneself or one's peoples from the "dangers" of another would allow increased possibilities for meaningful interactions and exchanges previously unexplored.

Last, we would see a world of peoples, nations, races, cultures and ideologies embracing each other - not in the spirit of sameness - but in the spirit of oneness. At this point, a whole new world of human living becomes possible.

Let's apply this fourfold picture to our present time of history making. Today, there is much talk of peace. Since the beginning of inter-tribal and international conflicts, peacemakers have tried to establish harmonious relationships between nations. Yet, such attempts have usually resulted in short term gains at best, and more often have failed.

In recent years, however, peace finally appears more and more possible, precisely because a new ingredient has come into being: our human world has begun to embrace the concept of its oneness as a human family. We are now in a world of active and dynamic inter-connectedness, perceivable in the arena of telecommunication, international business, and a host of intercultural phenomena that characterize our modern times. These practices go hand in hand with (and in fact are characterized by) a growing sense of our oneness and human interdependence. We are indeed a human family, and our collective consciousness is moving more and more energetically toward a fuller ownership of that fact.

A world that embraces freedom is a world that takes a daring leap into creativity. Allowing freedom of expression to individuals, groups and systems amounts to granting permission for each of these to become personally and collectively fulfilled. Such freedom also permits the advent of creations that were previously unthought of or feared. After centuries of kings, rulers and ideological systems controlling most people's freedom, our present human mentality has begun to grant increased freedom and autonomy to its peoples.

Self expression is perhaps more present in our world today than ever before in recorded history. In fact, we are quickly returning to the power of our dynamically creative nature. We are re-embracing a consciousness of oneness. As a result, our world today is on the verge of a new venture in personal and collective creativity.

What can we create? We can create respect for everyone's rights. We can create a world of freedom. We can create a world of enjoyment. We can create a world of peace.

Let's look at each of these answers more closely. Each person on our planet is creative. Equally important, each one of us has personally designed gifts of power, love and consciousness for the specific purpose of creating his and her self, life, world, even destiny. We human beings are placed on earth to create. Indeed, we have no choice but to create; it is our nature. Creativity flows from our depths, expresses in our consciousness, moves through our energy system, and takes form in our reality.

How we use our creativity, however, is up to us - whether it be for peace or war, for friendship or conflict, for openness or narrowness.

First, we can create *respect*. In this supportive context, undue judgment of any person's creation (e.g., the creation of war or conflict) as bad or wrong only perpetuates conflict. Judgment of anything as morally right or wrong - while certainly natural and understandable as a part of our dualistic consciousness - hinders our natural expressive inclinations and distracts us from the more fulfilling work of creative activity. Judging others - or ourselves, for that matter - as right or wrong, good or bad, winning or losing, merely depletes personal energies that could be used so much more effectively.

In this world of creative freedom, wherein we create what we choose, doesn't it make sense to dedicate ourselves to the dynamic and fulfilling process of our creative activity, without burdening ourselves with unnecessary value judgments and emotional turmoil? Indeed, the new world order that we are embracing as a human family is one where every person has a place of increased honor and freedom. Thus, to grant these qualities externally, while internally remaining strongly judgmental, is contradictory. This coming age of freedom includes not only the freedom to create, but also the freedom from undue judgment. For everyone.

Second, we can create a world *of freedom*. Indeed, our present age is demonstrating our increasing demand for more freedom for more people. Creating such a world of increased freedom is a process every one of us can take charge of, both personally and globally. In the intrapersonal domain, for example, each person can create a free, open and flowing environment for self expression within the inner workings of his or her own self. Becoming personally free - free to enjoy life, free to love, free to be happy - is an act of personal power and meaningful creativity.

Beyond the realm of personal freedom, we are free to create harmony between ourselves and the interpersonal environment around us. Each person can create an atmosphere of freedom and harmony for others. Some, for example, are naturally oriented toward creating a better life for many people, even for entire nations or cultures. Others, on the other hand, contribute to our collective freedom primarily by taking strong charge of the challenges of their own families or jobs.

Whatever our particular personal orientations, we all are capable of creating a dynamic atmosphere of freedom in our personal, interpersonal and collective world.

Third, each of us is capable of creating a world of *enjoyment*. How many people do you know who are truly enjoying their human and earthly life? Most people seem to be bound up in surviving the daily circumstances of their life, or actively attempting to make those circumstances better. Creating personal joy is an art few of us have mastered. Creating that same joy and happiness interpersonally is even more of a skill. Yet, such creations of enjoyment are possible, and often strongly invited from the depths of our spirit.

Notice that we can, and often do, bring about just these conditions of joy, happiness and pleasure, both for ourselves and for those around us. At those times, it is clear to us that the power to create these qualities of life is indeed ours. In fact, in the extreme you and I are quite capable of sowing seeds of joy into the consciousness of the entire world, primarily by taking charge of joy in our own lives, then responding to our own cues for spreading our joy outward. Our deep-level interconnection and bondedness set the stage for our personal creations to be deeply felt by those around us, and ultimately (though less observably) by all members of our human family.

Finally, we are able to create *world peace*. Global peace has remained an elusive quality throughout our human history - until now. Our present age is witnessing a renewed dedication to achieving peace on earth. Indeed, our commitment to its presence - not just as an absence of war or conflict, but also as an active state of interpersonal harmony - will determine the degree to which we actually actualize it in the realm of reality.

One thing is clear, however: *external* peace will have the same place and priority in our world of reality as does *internal* peace. Persons who attempt to create external peace without first creating peace within themselves usually achieve minimal external success. Peace is contagious; it moves from within to without, from our depths to our environment, from our inner consciousness to our outer reality.

Peace is perhaps our most identifiable desired objective in our political and international world today. Yet, its achievement can coincide only with the prioritizing of peace in all other sectors of our human world. For example, we cannot expect to create political peace without also committing ourselves to interracial peace; or to intrapersonal peace; or to intercultural peace. Peace is a cross-personal reality; it cannot be relegated or confined to certain spheres and omitted from others. Peace, universal principle that it is, has its own life and moving force. Like the air we breathe, peace is most powerful when it flows in and through every facet of human life.

From the depths of our consciousness, we all are moved to create peace, both internally and externally. Some do so by focusing their creative efforts onto their own lives, others by working for social change, still others by helping the less fortunate members of our human family. All of us are driven, albeit in individual ways, to be active and participatory members of a world of interconnected human beings.

Each person's efforts, even if ostensibly serving only his or her personal needs, contribute to the benefit of all other participants in our human world. Just as the mood and behavior of each family member affects every other person in that family, so does every member of our human race have a significant impact on his or her brothers and sisters in our global family. While this impact occurs at a more unconscious level of awareness, it is nonetheless a real and meaningful phenomenon.

Whatever the nature of our creations, if we achieve them with full awareness, they constitute a more powerful experience than if done without conscious awareness. We are always involved as meaningful participants in life's evolving drama; yet, any creative effort (thought, decision, activity) that includes our conscious involvement carries with it more power and more effectiveness.

Our world's great leaders have generally been men and women with a strong sense of personal and global awareness, a factor that contributed to their meaningful contribution. In fact, the spiritual leaders who have found their way into history's recordings were always known for their own powerful consciousness, as well as for their aware participation in the collective consciousness of humanity as a whole. Thus, no matter what the specific nature of our personal creations, the more expanded our awareness, the more exciting, fulfilling and impactful our experience.

Let's look at this phenomenon more fully. To create our reality blindly - without personal awareness - gives us the sense that whatever is happening in and around us is being done *to* us rather than *by* us. Experiencing life events without a sense of our personal involvement in their unfolding results in our feeling like a pawn, or even a victim of some other force.

If we perceive ourselves, however, as conscious participants in, even as aware creators of, our life's circumstances, then we experience a deep sense that we are indeed living out the ultimate intention of human life: that each of us create and co-create our human experience.

None of us is a victim of anything, except to the degree that a belief in victimness lives in our own mind. While the continually changing forces of life affect each one of us, we all are motivated primarily from the depths of our own spiritual and psychological being. Mahatma Ghandi wrote: "The only tyrant I accept in this world is the 'still, small voice' within." The fact that this "voice" often moves us without our conscious awareness or participation does not alter the fact that we are an intimate part of that creative force.

Many people have come to believe that, since reality is so often created without our being consciously aware of our part in its construction, we did not do it; that it is being done to us; or that it is engineered by a force other than ourselves. Whether we call that force God, fate, collective human consciousness or whatever else, the fact is that this creative force lives as powerfully within - and as a part of - our own consciousness as it does outside of us.

Thus, for us to divorce our personal consciousness from this dynamic force and define it as acting separately from our will, is to ignore a deeper reality - that we were created in oneness. That is, that we are in truth one with the very divine, inspirational and internal force that motivates or moves us to act. So much, in fact, that we can validly say that we are an intimate and essential part of that very causal force. We are co-creators, along with and expressive of that inwardly rooted creative force, of our very earthly reality.

This fact leads us to the underlying theme of creation. Life is dedicated to our active and conscious participation in the ongoing, evolving drama of creation. Our planet, in both its created and creative aspects, has one common theme - creativity. Human life joins with all other life forms on earth to celebrate the power and splendor of creativity on a daily and hourly basis. Our major reason for our occupying space here is to collaborate in the active project of daily creating anew ourselves, our lives and our planet.

What could be more appropriate, more fulfilling or more meaningful than this? To participate in the creative unfoldment of earth, in both its human and planetary di

mensions, is a mission both noble and exciting. Our human nature is replete with creative inspirations, energies and myths, primarily so we can use these gifts to fulfill this creative purpose.

What more fulfilling destiny is there than to take a conscious and committed part in this creative unfoldment! Earth, in both her created and developing state, is naturally attuned to our creative touch, responsive to our directed energies, and receptive to our dedicated involvement. You and I are purposeful participants in her evolution and fulfillment. It is our nature to join with her own innate urge to develop, in and through all her life forms. We facilitate this expansion by taking a consciously aware, co-creative role in her unfolding.

What to create? In one sense, our every creative venture, no matter what its content, by nature contributes to our collective creation of an ever-evolving, ever-expanding world of earthly fulfillment. In becoming more and more aware of the power and meaning of our participation in this process, we notice our personal importance and role in our creative planetary scheme.

In a larger sense, however, as we begin to feel more involved in our collective creation, we realize more than ever how we all are one, and how we are working together to create our world. That is, we bring our collective creative commitment from its previously unconscious realm of activity to its present place of honor in our conscious awareness. More and more, we are able to recognize our togetherness as a human family and blend our personal consciousness into a true "United States of Consciousness."

Therefore, we can acknowledge that we are not just creating our lives individually, we are also creating our world collectively - at every moment. Our personal intentions blend by design with those of every other member of our race; from the depths of our united consciousness come the varied and intentional creations of our world.

Some of these creative expressions are monumental and impressive - for example, the collapsing of the large Communist states and the gradual ending of racial Apartheid. Others serve more as negative means to a more positive end - such as overt hostilities or injustice - for the purpose of challenging us to rethink our cherished beliefs and change our creative decisions. It is in this vein that the saying, "peace is first created in the mind," has its foundation.

We are not only a loosely gathered group of individuals. We are also - at the deeper and more basic levels of our human consciousness - interactive in oneness, harmony and collaboration. It is at this deeper level of unified consciousness that we are already at peace. It is here where we decide how we are going to create the next chapter of our collective history. It is here where we huddle together and commit ourselves to mutual support and joint creativity. It is in this place of unity that we support each person's birth to individuality every day. And it is here - in our innermost place of oneness - that the most fundamental spark of our personal and collective creativity resides.

Our collective, collaborative, creative minds are ever active, and each of us is a meaningful contributor to this activity. The personal thoughts, decisions and actions of every person add significantly to this collective mind. Indeed, they influence and enhance the outcome of our collective creations in ways that we are only beginning to realize. As this phenomenon becomes more a part of our conscious awareness, each of us is becoming a more involved and committed contributor to our world and our future. Each and every human being is becoming a more powerful voice in our evolving United States of Consciousness.

The fact that each of us is a dynamic and involved part of our collective consciousness has significant implications for us all, both personally and as a human race. Specifically, it means that none of us is a casual observer or a sidelines player in the game of human living. Nor is any of us a victim, or a passive recipient of life's many-sided circumstances.

Rather, every one of us functions as creator of our life conditions, both in our personal life and in our global family. As such, we are related to every other member of our planet in an interconnected and interdependent manner. We affect others, not only directly but indirectly, not only consciously but unconsciously. You and I act personally and globally all the time, and we do so with power and impact.

In this context, then, let's take a fresh look at your creations. What do you want to create for yourself, for those around you, and for our human world? How do you choose to contribute to the earth herself, to other life forms on this planet, and to the greater universe around us?

Actually, all of us are moved, from within our own depths, to contribute a unique blend of creative endeavors in all of these areas. Some of us will do so by being more self-focused in our creations, while others will be almost exclusively other-oriented. Again, some are driven to affect worldwide conditions, while others feel themselves oriented almost exclusively to the seemingly smaller world of their families.

Each of us is driven to accomplish or express a certain "something" in life, and that drive comes from a source of knowing within us. Some name this source an inner truth; others, God within us; some, our indwelling spirit; and others, our intuition. Whatever the name, it's our source of direction and wisdom as we lead our lives and create our destinies.

Our personal wisdom moves and invites us to create our world exactly as it is meaningful and important at any specific time. A child, for example, might create an imaginary world of fantasy, while an adult might create effective job skills. Each creation is right, timely and appropriate for each creator. Each one is being moved by that visionary inner force that knows - by design - who we are, what we're here to do, and what is primary in importance at that moment.

That inner wisdom is so named because it expresses our most meaningful and personalized program for living our life. It is our operating manual, our handbook for the most individual and appropriate way for us to create our life and our destiny. Every one of us has this underlying wisdom and truth. It's like an individualized computer chip lodged deep in each person's psyche; this customized chip unfolds its unique knowledge, wisdom and movement at just the appropriate time.

Let's summarize this point, and apply it to your life. You're the creator of your life, the master of your destiny. You have as an integral part of your functioning an inner consciousness - your personal wisdom and truth - that moves and invites you to create life in a unique and special way. However one might define this inner source, it is a part of you that holds the key to your specific purpose or purposes in living. Your conscious participation in this moving life force results in a fuller experience of each of life's moments, as well as a greater sense of personal fulfillment. It also allows you to become increasingly aware of your co-creative role in the development of our earthly and human future.

The beauty of this process is this: you allow yourself to be conscious, aware and fully present - to yourself, to your life and to our world. Most people that I've known admit that they are only partly present to life. They are either resisting some part of their human experience, refusing to look at some facet of their life, or avoiding the feelings associated with some aspect of human living. Many, perhaps most of us, allow ourselves only partially conscious participation in the ongoing and evolving creations of our lives. For this reason, we deprive ourselves of both the awareness and the power of our actual creations. In fact, we often defer the responsibility for these creative moments to some other force, thus distancing ourselves further from the potential meaning and fulfillment of each event in our lives.

Nonetheless, the truth is that each of us has the capacity to be a fully conscious, alive and creative being. We are becoming more consciously creative, at levels that have heretofore been labeled unconscious. Indeed, we are beginning to bring these two worlds - the conscious and the unconscious - together in a conjoint or unified awareness, thereby inviting ourselves to an experience of undivided personal power. Imagine the power and force of these two levels of awareness coming into a United State of Consciousness. In unity there is indeed strength.

Life is not just to be lived; it is to be felt and experienced; known and sensed; created and written. Life is a magnetic, dynamic, moving, meaning-filled experience. It was designed as a dance to be danced, a play to be acted out, a drama to be lived, a novel to be written. Your personal experience in life is your individual story, wherein you are the main character. What greater phenomenon could you participate in? Your life is an ongoing evolution of creative events, personally designed for your experience, pleasure and unique fulfillment.

No one else lives the particular drama that is yours; no one else experiences the life events you do; no one else is inspired the way you are. Isn't it ironic that you would even consider *not* living your life as it was intended to be: a dynamic interplay of meaningful and fulfilling events designed to allow you the role of creator, hero, protagonist and playwright? Why not live it in the intended spirit? Why not?

After many years as a psychotherapist specializing in the transformation of people's deepest problems and struggles, I have come to the conclusion that many of us get so wrapped up in the drama and process of personal growth that we forget to live. We lose our vision of the end of the tunnel, and get lost in the path. Many who pursue either psychological growth or spiritual freedom become so engrossed in the actual process of change, even so enamored of the techniques involved in that process, that they lose sight of the very freedom they are pursuing.

Why is this? I believe that the answer lies somewhere within our collective consciousness. It seems that we all carry a covert assumption that dreams are to be dreamed more than realized, and that life is a process of effort more than achievement. It seems that most people are afraid to take the dramatic plunge into a full belief that they are indeed free.

For example, how many Christians, even though they adhere to the Christian message of freedom, really believe that they are free because of their belief in the person of Jesus? Likewise, how many "graduates" of psychotherapy, a science dedicated to freedom from pain and a meaningful embrace of life, are truly happy in their post-therapy experience of human living? Also, how many spiritually dedicated persons actually accept into the depths of their consciousness the spiritual "truth" that they are indeed created perfect?

An honest answer to the above questions reveals, of course, that there are relatively few people who truly embrace freedom. Most of us prefer to blame circumstances, mouth excuses, and otherwise abdicate responsibility as we claim that our "collective consciousness" is responsible for our sad (unfree, victimized) state of affairs.

Yet, nothing is or could be farther from the truth. In reality, every human being is free, whole, and immensely powerful. Each one of us is in charge of creating his and her life circumstances, completely. To attempt to lessen our sense of personal ownership of our creative role only constitutes a mind game, and has the effect of postponing the true joy of creating.

Ironically, the world today does not need a new philosophy. No new truth is going to bring us to the heights of freedom or allow a magic breakthrough into happiness. In fact, we already have the truth we need. It is enshrined in the various scriptures of Islam, Judaism, Taoism, Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism and a host of other spiritual beliefs. It resides also in the collective consciousness of our human race - in every mind of every person on earth. It is expressed in the teachings of world leaders, prophets, visionaries and priests. It lives in you and me, with both a global and an individualized focus.

The truth we are all searching for is already here - in many forms, formulas, and approaches to life. It's before our very eyes, both externally and internally. It is up to you and me to personalize this truth into our own meaningful field of life orientation, so that we can decide what is true and right for us at any particular moment.

The truth is this: you are a wonderful, lovable, worthwhile, vital member of our earthly family. You are filled with creative tools and gifts for bringing the many mysteries of life into dynamic expressive form; these are your personal tools of power, love and consciousness. You have an individual purpose that serves as your platform for creating a life of fulfillment, meaning and pleasure. Best of all, you have been placed in charge of this entire creative adventure. To blame anything as a deterrent to your personal power or fulfillment is nothing short of living an untruth.

We are especially in charge of our consciousness - the thoughts, assumptions and beliefs we live by. What we believe is both our creative responsibility and our personal privilege. For example, it is our choice to believe whatever is in our best interests or for our betterment. Our minds are a powerful vehicle for a unique creative act on our part - the choosing of our beliefs, orientations, attitudes, and values. We are equipped with an inner warehouse of cognitive and intellectual potential, just waiting to be brought into creative expression in and through our minds. The human mind serves as the cognitive playing field

on which we understand the game of life, both in general and as it is designed for our personal experience. It serves as a laboratory table on which we microscopically dissect life's issues and laboriously create explanations of life's mysteries. Our mind is a dynamic vehicle for knowing and thinking, problem-solving and theorizing, fantasizing and imagining, analyzing and interpreting. It's our personalized, individualized tool for taking charge of the reality called life.

To think that we are helpless victims, powerless pawns, or otherwise not in charge of this creative process is unrealistic. To imagine that someone else, an undesired circumstance, or another force is more powerful than we are in influencing our decisions is unfounded. To believe that we are passive rather than active participants in creating our myths and beliefs, or to postulate that we don't have enough personal power or knowledge (or anything else) to be completely in charge of our mind has no basis in reality. We are *totally in charge* of our consciousness.

Create what? Create whatever you feel moved to create, whatever your responsible and committed self inspires you to create, whatever your heart propels you to create. Create your mind, then your reality. Create your personal life, your relationships, your external world and your role in that world. Create it all in your own individual way, according to your personal design, in a way that expresses your unique purpose and fulfills your special design for a meaningful life. Nothing holds, or can hold, you back from these creations - nothing. You - and only you - are the commander of your self and the creator of your world.

When you have finished the task of creating your own life and world, then it will undoubtedly shift your focus to the adventure of creating our collective world anew. When you reach that longed for point of personal fulfillment, you automatically begin to take on a sense of collaborative unity with others who are dedicated to our world. Consequently, you will feel an increasingly stronger impulse to help create our external world's future in a meaningful and dynamic way.

You never cease your creative role. Rather, you continue to expand your personal consciousness to encompass our collective vision and to include the integrative perspective of oneness. More and more, your personal creativity becomes completely free, conscious and powerful. At some point you are ready for the ultimate human fulfillment - that of using your creative talents to care meaningfully for your fellow travelers on this planet called earth.

CHAPTER 6

FROM DUALITY TO ONENESS ... AND BACK

Duality is the chessboard of our earthly existence. The many faces of individuality constitute the various chess pieces with which we play the game of human life. The world of opposites provides the many-faceted angles from which we view and play this meaningful earthly game.

Duality is a frequently used term in describing the human and earthly experience. Duality consists of the vast arena of differences, polarities, divisions, multiplicities and variations with which we live. Sameness is in no way an integral part of the human design; it would not allow us the flexibility and range of options needed for a full human experience. Indeed, our humanity involves a dualistic experience of multifold attitudes, beliefs, life styles, orientations, personalities and relationships. No single relationship is like another, nor are any one person's beliefs like those of another. Our human world is filled with differences - by design.

Some - usually those more spiritually oriented - feel a strong pull to leave or graduate from this experience of duality and live in the more serene reality of our oneness, in the simplicity and essence of our pure spirit. Ironically, however, the inevitable circumstances and forces of their lives usually move them dramatically back into the very dualistic patterns that they have sought to escape. While a relative few of us are exempted from a personal involvement with duality's challenges, such exclusion is simply not the "path" to which the majority of us is destined. For most of us - not called to live life in monastic and reclusive solitude - the human scene presents an exciting opportunity to embrace duality's many expressions. We are here to use its multiple forms as tools for an innovative creative process, and to enjoy the fruits of its varied possibilities. Most of us are presented with duality's multi-faceted challenges as an integral part of our human journey. We can relate to it not as some karmic punishment or torture, but as a platform for purposeful creative expression.

Thus, duality serves as an integral and essential part of life. We can neither escape its varied opportunities nor avoid its enticing allure. Duality is the foundational substance of our human experience, a tangible and necessary means for achieving the very fulfillment and pleasure for which we were created.

Duality's focus is primarily on the arena of differences. While we human beings are naturally one in our deeper consciousness, our world of reality is chiefly oriented toward meaningful expressions of differences. For example, we are created male and female, black and white, tall and short, intelligent and slow of mind, strong and weak, and so on. Each person is unlike his or her neighbor. Some have domineering personalities, while others are more passive. Some are oriented toward intimacy, and others prefer emotional distance. Some are left-brained; others, right-brained. Differences abound, even among those who cluster around similar personal characteristics.

Our whole world is characterized by individual differences, personalized expression, and a broad spectrum of distinct styles. Duality daily fills our experience with its unique theme - the theme of differences, individuality, separateness, opposites.

Opposites abound in every niche and crevice of life. Light and dark, left and right, love and hate, happy and sad, positive and negative - these are but a few descriptions of our world of opposites. These opposites allow us not only concrete choices of one possibility over another, but a broad range and spectrum of options between the two extremes. Opposites present us literally thousands of possibilities for taking creative charge of our personal and collective experiences.

Given the substantive and dramatic place that opposites play in our human life, why should anyone be in conflict with their presence and activity in our lives? Is there any reason to condemn opposites, duality, and differences, when our entire world is filled with their purposeful movement? Doesn't it seem even silly for us to condemn duality, when it is our underlying gift for a dynamic earthly experience?

Why do so many people experience such conflict with duality? Simply put, because so many of us feel locked into a good/evil, right/wrong, win/lose, approval/disapproval pattern of thinking and living. Let's look at this pattern more closely. It is only because we judge duality and its attributes (differences, opposites, etc.) as good or bad that we feel pain. Our dualistic condition in and of itself, however, is in no way a source of personal or global pain. Rather, its primary purpose is to provide a broad-based springboard for a meaningful and fulfilling creative experience. Our historically evolved judgment of duality as a source of conflict is the product of our human choice, not an inherent state of reality.

We can assign judgment, blame and condemnation to duality, but such a gesture leads us only into a world of perceived conflict, powerlessness and pain. In life's natural rhythm, however, there is no logical reason for such pain, nor is there any reason to judge duality as an innately negative phenomenon.

In contrast, duality serves our earthly purposes quite well. For example, we can create wonders with the tools offered by duality's differences. Remember the lion, the tin man and the scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz? Starting from the point of powerlessness, inflexibility and ignorance, each of them in turn created self-confidence, love and awareness through the process of taking charge of these duality-based conditions.

It is the prerogative and right of every one of us to do the same. We can move ourselves into the driver's seat of life simply by employing duality's many facets. Through our own dualistic experiences, we can create joy, strength, meaning and fulfillment. Through embracing each other's differences, we can appreciate one other, love one other, and support every person's unique manner of expressing. Through a willingness to deal with duality's opposites, each one of us can move along the creative continuum of life, embracing each moment's possibilities in a fresh and open-ended way.

Have you ever noticed how bored we all get with repetition and sameness? To spare us such boredom, duality provides us with an ever-moving, ever-changing experience of life, and invites us to a new creation at each turn of events. Given the fact that our every moment is filled with ongoing change and freshness, isn't it curious that so many of us seem afraid of change? Here again, we have duality's opposites in expression - fascination with change and resistance to its very presence.

I recently gave a presentation to a select group of world "helpers," all of whom worked for a very large international organization dedicated to the relief of human suffering. Though my talk was not geared toward the topic of duality, almost every member of that group began questioning me intensely about the role and power of duality in creating human misery, inequality and pain. Through their questions, it became clear to me that each of them was in genuine and bitter pain over this dualistic aspect of the human condition, and truly believed that "evil" had some sort of invisible yet tangible grip over our human race. In fact, most of these dedicated individuals felt condemned to a life of having to "fight" evil, or at the very least being in pain because of its presence.

My responses did not reinforce their assumptions and orientations. I explained that each one of us is in our dualistic world not for suffering *per se*, but for creating. I further expressed that each one of us has the innate power and choice either to perceive oneself as a victim of evil (note the implied judgment of duality), or to live beyond that level of belief and experience. I suggested that, through the visionary eyes of oneness, the phenomenon of duality becomes a challenge rather than a chore, an invitation more than a condemnation, an opportunity instead of a struggle.

Of course, there is evil in this sense: people choose to behave in ways that are self-serving and not for the benefit of others. Further, some people choose to hurt and kill others in order to create a reality to their own liking. This fact does not mean, however, that you and I need to be in bitter turmoil; nor does it invite us to decry or condemn duality as a terrible phenomenon.

Rather, the presence of evil invites us to search for more creative ways to limit those unfair or violent behaviors, and to minimize the chance of such behavior happening again, that is, to bring about a more fulfilling and meaningful reality. We are neither determined nor defined by the presence of people who abuse rather than support us. Rather, the dualistic fact of evil allows us a fuller opportunity for taking more powerful charge of our human condition.

Ironically, our collective condemnation of duality certainly in no way diminishes its presence or activity among us. Rather, such harsh judgment on our part only leaves us unable to enjoy the creative process, and incapable of feeling our inherent power to be fully in command of our human experience.

The fact that some people hurt others does not imply that we are victims of a struggle between good and evil, as some would believe. Nor does it signify that we must mount campaigns to "win" over evil for the cause of good. Such an antagonistic approach simply locks us psychologically into a no-win, seemingly unending fight between good and evil. Indeed, there is no effective way to win such a useless battle, nor is there any benefit in enduring the inevitable stress that this struggle produces.

The only valid way to judge duality is first to look deep within our personal and collective soul, and therein to find our sense of life's truest meaning. In my personal search for this meaning, this answer has continually emerged: duality's opposites occupy a central place in my life so that I can experience life in meaningful ways, and create as many purposeful realities as possible.

Life is not inherently designed for struggle, even though we have the right and power to create just such an experience. Rather, you and I are dynamic players on a field of unending possibilities - our personal "field of dreams." Our greatest talent is our naturally creative drive to use duality's ingredients for the fulfillment and betterment of ourselves and our planet.

Duality, then, is a gift to be treasured and utilized. When we are in harmony with its mysteries and movements, we can truly enjoy its many dimensions and opportunities. When we oppose its flow or misinterpret its intentions, we set ourselves up for an experience of perceived disharmony and pain. I am suggesting that each of us has a golden opportunity to create and enjoy life's abundance through a meaningful relationship with its dualistic dynamics. Rather than being our enemy or a pain-filled companion on our path through life, duality offers us immense possibilities for self expression and self creation. Such fulfilling activity would be impossible without duality's active and vital role in our lives.

Duality and oneness interact in an intricate web of mutually supporting activity. Oneness serves as our underlying core of consciousness and our source of clear vision. Duality characterizes our many-faceted, multi-formed world of outward manifestations. Like two sides of a powerful coin, oneness and duality work together in meaningful harmony and collaboration. Our perspective of oneness lives mostly behind the scenes and in the depths of our consciousness, while duality dances on the eternal stage of multiplicity, diversity and individuality.

For this reason, we are faced with many definitions of the truth rather than one. While our human family is united and integrated at the core of our consciousness, our external lives are centered around multiple beliefs, orientations, personalities and forms. In short, our observable human world is characterized by a focus on multiple expressions, much more than on sameness, oneness or consistency.

Oneness is indeed a presence and power that lives vibrantly within our personal and collective being. It constitutes for all of us a dynamic source of inspiration and wisdom. Yet, the engaging world of human reality does not invite us to focus primarily on this underlying essence, but rather on the varied and complex forms that allow for creative expression. Human life - especially in its "reality" perspective - is centered around meaningful experiences of duality, differences and multiplicity. Here, the world of complexity, opposites and processes reigns supreme.

Remember again our fourfold picture of human nature. Our spirit, myths, energy and reality constitute a four-windowed experience of life on earth. Each perspective or world of experience constitutes a unique way of living life, and invites us to a special and singular personal fulfillment. Each one of us lives in and experiences each of these worlds in a special, unique and powerful way. For example, those created to live life predominantly through the window of reality will deal with duality as a meaningful and dominant piece of their human puzzle. Those moved to specialize more in the spiritual arena will usually not assign duality such a central role, but will still move themselves to work with its active presence in their daily routines.

Duality, then, lives and expresses strongly in every one of us, not as a torture or source of irritation, but as our underlying basis for personal and collective fulfillment. Each human being relates to this dualistic world in his and her own way, but all of us use it as an essential part of our creative experience and personal existence.

Moving from duality back to oneness allows us an uplifting picture of our everyday reality - one that motivates and invites us to the fullest pursuit of our human purpose. Moving from duality into the unique perspective of oneness involves us not in a denial of duality's possibilities, but in a dynamic dance with its many-faceted invitations to live life fully.

Oneness gives us an overview of life's dynamics that is freeing as well as illuminating. In regard to the world of duality, oneness shows us its basic purpose and role in our human world of creative living. This overview demonstrates that what has often been described as a source of conflict can also be perceived as a source of potential joy.

Why does oneness offer us such a difference in perspective? Actually, oneness lifts us out of our collective mind set long enough to allow a fresh angle of interpretation. It brings us to a unique vantage point that is detached from our historical belief in pain. It allows us to see the forest of life from above rather than from within. Just as we can move from the letter of the law to its true spirit when we distance ourselves enough from the law's dictates, so does oneness draw us into the spirit and purity - rather than the complexities - of duality's nature and purpose.

What then is the picture of duality, as seen through the eyes of oneness? Through the integrative perspective that emerges from a consciousness of oneness, our earthly duality begins to look purposeful, intentional and meaningful. Through this unique vision, we see our dualistic world as a special gift and a meaningful opportunity. Through oneness' greater vision, our world of multiplicity even looks like an exciting playground for human living, a strong stage for human creativity, and a powerful foundation for personal and collective expression. Thus duality looks benign, inviting and useful - user-friendly, if you will.

Because of its ingrained differences and diversities, duality constitutes that part of our human path that allows us to pursue our creative destiny. It gives us the possibility to be ourselves in an almost unlimited array of expressions and forms. To assert that duality is a significant part of our human life is an understated expression of a deep and penetrating truth about our meaningful human journey.

I invite us, then, to use and embrace duality's many possibilities for creative self-expression. How about shifting our mind-set about duality to one that allows us an intimate and loving experience of its dynamics? Surely, it is possible for us to learn to take pleasure in this aspect of life. After all, aren't we innately oriented toward this world of dualistic expression anyway? Isn't it our purposeful destiny to use duality's ingredients as a basis for our creations, both personally and as a human family?

The answer to these questions is a resounding "yes!" Our human experience is what we choose it to be. Our consciousness - our mind-set and belief system - sets the stage for us either to enjoy or to despise any experience, either to embrace or to shrink from life's purest invitations. If we perceive a situation as threatening, we indeed will tend to avoid or attack it; if we view the same situation as inviting and potentially pleasurable, however, our experience of it will be completely different. In this sense, the quality of our life is precisely what we make it to be. Life on earth is indeed a self-fulfilling prophesy, in that it enacts our deepest perceptions and orientations.

Ask yourself how you relate to this human world of dualistic complexities. What are your attitudes, expectations and assumptions in relation to this essential aspect of your life? Side-by-side with your personal answer, open yourself to the viewpoint of oneness. You can usually find the voice and invitation of oneness within the depths of your own spirit.

From this place in the depths of your consciousness, ask yourself: how am I urging myself to embrace life's many dimensions and differences? How am I moving myself to experience these varied expressions of life - as a critic, or a tormented participant, or a confused student of life? Or perhaps as an active, involved and energized creator of my life circumstances?

I believe that a oneness-based attitude toward our dualistic world takes the fear out of human living, opens us to the innate excitement of life, and involves us as meaningful participants in life's unfolding. If we think about it, human life is an open book for every one of us. No matter what our life circumstances, all of us have a unique opportunity to create ourselves, our lives and our world - according to our own personal design. None of us is a passive or powerless player of life's game; nor are we naturally oriented toward meaninglessness, depression or fear. Rather, we are innately engineered to pursue and create our own destiny.

Life is a series of invitations, both from without and within each of us. For example, you are well aware of your own inner urgings to learn, express, become aware and achieve. In each of us is that inner knowing that speaks to us through the deeper world of our spirit (soul, essence, higher power), inviting us to live each phase of life in our own singular fashion. This oneness-inspired voice gives most of us this message: all of human life is designed to be an exciting, interesting, moving experience aimed at our personally meaningful fulfillment. Nothing short of this full adventure is intended in our personal journey through this duality-filled arena of living.

Oneness is a unifier of life's diversities. Not only is our life space filled with differences, but also with an underlying drive to unify those differences within our own consciousness. We all have the capacity to deal with life from within the human forest, and also to observe life from above that forest. Experiencing duality's varied energies, behaviors and circumstances from within the human forest gives us one kind of creative experience. Observing that same set of life characteristics from above gives us another type of experience - a unifying experience, a perspective of oneness. An orientation to oneness is a natural synthesizer of life's dualities and a powerful source of wisdom in dealing with this world of differences.

Unity, or oneness, is also a source of vision. Through its window we can look upon the entire human drama of multi-colored events with understanding, sensitivity, wisdom and compassion. Without needing feelings of fear or judgments of condemnation, we are free to see life in its natural purpose and fundamental meaning. Through the eyes of oneness, the following vision emerges into consciousness:

- ❑ Each human being is a creative and meaningful composite of qualities, energies, talents and purposes.
- ❑ Life on earth is an ever-changing, evolving experience of creative possibilities.
- ❑ The primary purpose of all life on earth, and specifically human life, is to create - to have a spiritual, mythical, energized, and realistic set of experiences through which we can create life fully and powerfully.
- ❑ Earthly life always invites its participants to enjoy the fruits of this planet; for humans, this invitation relates especially to the fruits of power, love and consciousness.
- ❑ Our individual personality is both personal and interpersonal, private and social, individual and collective; we affect ourselves and those around us by our every thought, decision and behavior.
- ❑ All life is meant to be a dynamic, fulfilling, and exciting journey.

- ❑ Every person is given a free will, primarily for the purpose of creating his and her own life; we are in charge of our own person and world.
- ❑ Within each person is the gift of vision - the possibility of an overview of life - for the purpose of inner peace, fuller understanding, and personal wisdom.

Note that the above vision is devoid of conflict-based issues. It does not define life as a struggle between good and evil. While we have historically created the concept of such a struggle, both individually and collectively - and indeed we have the free will and the right to do so - nothing in our purest consciousness ever intended that we lock ourselves into this creation.

Note, also, that this vision of our earthly and human nature does not propose or imply any underlying rationale for such feelings as fear, anxiety, anger, depression or sadness. Such feelings are effects from, not causes of, a sense of separation from our inner source of oneness. This sense of separation, in turn, arises from our negative judgments about our dualistic condition.

We are free. We can use our gift of freedom as we wish. While our choices are always accompanied by the principle of cause and effect - that is, whatever we create has its consequences - we are nonetheless free to involve ourselves in our creations as we see fit.

You and I are creators, first and foremost. As such, we have within our nature the very tools with which to bring about any and all creations, without limit or preconditions. Freedom is a wonderful gift, one that serves as a powerful backdrop to support our creative efforts on earth. This gift implies no criticism, no punishment, only natural effects and consequences. We are free.

What an awesome set-up for your creative adventure! How ideal and perfectly designed is this world of many-faceted possibilities for your purposeful involvement! How vast this canvas on which to paint your own and our collective human dreams! This is, indeed, a wondrous and magnificent planet; yet, also, your co-creative power on this planet is equally magnificent. Your creative options, limitless and unbridled except by the self-imposed limits of your own consciousness, allow you full expression of the unique and dynamic being you are. How magnificent a world!

Thus, duality, your companion and facilitator, is the most perfect stage and foundation possible for a fully meaningful life experience. Why not embrace its dynamic possibilities and commit yourself to a free and purposeful creative life? Why not feast upon the many possibilities for fulfillment and meaning that this earth offers you? Best of all, why not really enjoy the creative adventure of being and expressing who you are on earth? Embracing duality's opportunities, while experiencing them through the eyes of oneness, opens you to the most natural, powerful and fulfilling experience of earthly life. Nothing could be more meaningful!

From duality to oneness. This journey allows us a vision of our nature and our meaning. Once clear, we're free to jump back into duality's world of life-offering alternatives, with a renewed sense of self and purpose that liberates us to be full creators on earth.

From duality to oneness, where the view is freeing, loving and energizing. Then, back into the dance of life, with new thinking and fresh dedication to making every moment meaningful and alive. From duality to oneness... and now back into the fullness of your creative purpose.

CHAPTER 7

VISION! HERE'S MINE! WHAT'S YOURS?

Though the eyes of oneness, we have access to perhaps the purest, clearest vision imaginable of our human world. On this planet of unlimited possibilities, those with more global vision usually become the leaders of those whose vision is more narrow. We tend to look to those with a broader vision for insight and wisdom about our lives and our future. Because of our need for the bigger picture, we reach out to the visionaries and prophets of a given age for answers to life's dilemmas.

Vision is an essential and necessary quality of our human character. One's vision actually determines the nature and quality of his or her life. For example, if a person's vision is that life is an uninterrupted pattern of personal struggle, then it is predictable that most of his or her experience will be difficult and struggle-based. That is, form follows thought, behavior follows vision. According to the theory of the self-fulfilling prophesy, it is our personal vision that leads us to decide, behave and create in the particular and singular ways we do.

Your personal vision contributes strongly to what you do in your life. For example, if you visualize yourself as capable of overcoming any obstacle, your behavior in the face of any given challenge will be confident, bold and probably effective. Likewise, if you visualize yourself as unable to overcome a given fear, then you will undoubtedly allow that fear to stay with you throughout life. Your vision of yourself and of life is a powerful contributor to your personal happiness and fulfillment.

What is your vision of yourself? of our earth? of humankind? How do you define yourself as a purposeful participant in our world's unfolding history? What roles do you see yourself playing here on planet earth, both for your own creative experience and for that of our entire planet? What vision plays out in your mind relative to your unique purpose or mission? Answers to these questions (and others) determine to a large degree how you live your life and, indeed, how we all live our lives.

A visionary is one who sees the broad perspective and the big picture; one who is able to see beyond the specific to the general, through the apparent to the fuller meaning and purpose of each moment. Many people lead their lives with little picture of their fuller purpose or truest identity; they mainly live each moment motivated only by the vision accorded by their immediate surroundings, that is, without a broader picture. For this reason, these persons look to others to tell them what to do, seek out identified experts for guidance, or reach out to those who claim specific expertise for advice. They barely own their innate capacity for vision.

We all are visionaries, however. Our vision is rooted in our sense of oneness, and it is available to all of us. After having completed many years of formal education, I remember feeling a strong personal orientation to embark upon a different path. Specifically, I felt a compelling inner drive to forget everything I had learned - that's right, forget it all - and simply open to being with life as it naturally was. That meant I needed to forget my precious theories (about anything and everything), my learned interpretations of life, even my favorite beliefs - so that I could simply be with all the events, persons and situations in a free, unbiased and open way.

Well, I did exactly that. As I backed away from my learned knowledge (a task not as easy as it sounds), simply allowing my mind to become neutral and receptive in relation to life's experiences, I found an amazing phenomenon occurring. I actually felt more *alive* to each moment, each person and each event. Even more, I became more sensitive to the deeper meanings and purposes of every experience - not through analyzing them in my mind (I forgot all that, remember?), but simply by letting my open-minded self be present to them. It simply happened, on its own, without my engineering it. What I learned from this vastly meaningful ritual was this: life speaks to us if we are simply willing to listen freely and without bias.

This process actually took a few years to complete. In fact, its fine-tuning was accomplished during a several year period in which I felt more and more a part of life in its natural state. Earth became a more alive experience for me, not just a place to be analyzed or deciphered. Best of all, I slowly began to enter the world of earth's own vision, to see humanity from its own collective framework, to experience life from a fuller perspective. I felt more connected to, and a vital part of, life's natural ways.

It was a lesson of immense personal value to me. In fact, my own life changed dramatically from that time on. More and more, the natural qualities of life were available to me, not because of any theory or belief on my part, but because I trusted the innate wisdom of our created world.

It's like a relationship: the more we let go of our learned perceptions and give in to the moment of intimacy, the more our loved one is able to be present to us in his or her most real qualities. Further, with such willing openness, we can read, understand and know the other as that person *really* is, not as we are preconditioned to see him or her. Many of us never experience such a moment, because we never let go (of our beliefs, suspicions, security, etc.) long enough to trust the process, without extensive self-protection or hiding behind our personal values or beliefs. Yet, once we let go and trust the innate wisdom of life, something different happens.

What happens is that we experience life anew, in its natural beauty. Rather than viewing persons or circumstances through the eyes of our previous learning, we are able to let them speak to our minds and hearts with their own innate quality and magic. Every person and circumstance of life have their own special quality of being, their own magical spirit, and their unique way of communicating with us. When we are simply open to the natural experience of that person or event, without any theories or judgments, we can actually see and know that person (or whatever) more clearly.

Vision comes more from "just being" than from thinking or theorizing. True clarity is usually more the result of being open and receptive than from personal effort. The fullest vision comes more powerfully from inspiration than from contemplation, although contemplative thought and cognitive process usually accompany the movement of vision from our unconscious depths into our conscious awareness.

You and I are visionaries - by nature. It is our created nature to know and to explore all facets of life, to see the general as well as the particular. It is in our design to be both seer and player, observer and participant, visionary and experiencer of life. No matter what our particular way of participating in life's drama, each of us has an underlying and unique gift of knowing, seeing and discerning - that is, perceiving beyond the ordinary into the special.

Could it be that life is mainly a series of meaningless events and rituals? While such an assumption is certainly possible when one is lost in the daily grind, the view of the visionary is quite different. The visionary recognizes that every moment of life is a special and meaningful experience, a unique creation. Even events which seem repetitive or ordinary have an underlying array of meaning, purpose and possibility. No matter what its nature or appearance, every moment is filled with varying opportunities and meaningful living.

How we fill those moments is our creative choice, the expression of our decisions, and the fulfillment of our vision. We can fill each experience by being totally involved and creative, or partially focused and numb. We are as in charge of our time, energy and myths as we choose to be. None of us can escape his or her creative role in dealing with life's daily possibilities; what we do with those opportunities is our creative prerogative.

How creative are you? How focused and involved are you in making each moment of your life meaningful? How fully are you creating the experiences of your life? How do you view the events of life: as a dynamic unfolding of options for your meaningful creativity, or as something happening to or around you, that is, as none of your business?

Vision gives us the possibility of seeing the optimal and most desirable kind of creation to pursue. It allows us to see ourselves as masters rather than slaves; opens us to see the beauty of situations beyond their short-term appearances. Human creation is filled with opportunities to make new realities out of old ones and to live each experience in its more natural and fulfilling way. Vision allows us to pursue the fullness of every situation by showing us its bigger picture.

What is your vision - of yourself, your life, our human world, the earth, God? As the title of this chapter implies, I have a personal vision that I want to share with you. My vision is one of earth and its dynamic possibilities. It begins with a poetic vision of earth as mother, expressed on the next page (p. 102).

This poem invites us into a vision of our planet as mother. Using the metaphor of earth as mother opens us to becoming aware of the beauty, love and nurturing of a planet so often seen as a floor on which to walk rather than a mother bearing gifts. Your own vision of earthly life may include a different metaphor or image. Whatever your personal approach to experiencing this planet, you have within you a deep and inspiring vision of her (its, his, our) role, life and nature. Your vision is unique, even if it looks similar to that of another "visionary." Yours is important because it allows you to participate in our planet's creative life in a special way and from a unique perspective.

My vision is one that comprises the entire earthly experience. Its breadth allows us to enjoy this lush planet and its varied life options, rather than feel weighed down by its apparent problems. This vision has derived simply from my being with each aspect of planet earth, especially the human aspects, with an open mind and heart. It is a vision that has emerged from my perceiving life through the eyes of oneness. This simple but expansive process has resulted in the following ten-point vision:

- (1) This spinning energy mass called planet earth is unique in that it is capable of supporting *life* in a way that no other planet in our solar system can. In fact, supporting physical, emotional, mental and spiritual life is the special talent expressed in and boasted by this small planet at the sidelines of the universe. Developing and evolving life is the special theme of earth. In fact, we can logically assert that earth's dynamic purpose is that of supporting and allowing life to flourish within its atmospheric body.

EARTH VISION

I see a vision
of our Earth
and of its many expressions of life....

I see our planet. We call her Earth, Gaia - alive... whole... complete...
in and of herself; needing no human life to fulfill it,
living, growing, expressing on her own.

She slowly evolved into motherhood, giving birth to many,
many children: birds and branches,
beasts and beauty,
lush, lavish leaves of life,
sentient, feeling, conscious beings.

How wondrous this passionate maternal globe dancing in space,
filled with a vast sea of infinite love
that births and nurtures such expressive richness!
How perfect these creations,
conceived in her harmony and beauty!

I see this mother planet's human children
sucking at her generous breast,
breathing the air-filled energy of her life-giving body,
eating plentifully of her love-borne fruits.

I see her, our Earth-mother,
adoring us as her beauteous creations,
protecting us with her loving embrace,
reminding us of our innate joy and grace,
inviting us to live in the harmony of her Nature,
nudging us to participate more fully in her wisdom.

I hear this wise and patient Earth-mother beckoning to us, her
human children,
to remember the beauty of our conception, to recall our oneness
with her loving gifts,
to embrace all her glorious expressions of life,
... and, in so doing, to find ourselves anew!

(2) Second, life as it exists on earth in so many forms has a core and meaningful function: to express *beauty!* All life - whether human, animal, vegetable or otherwise - is a special and individual expression of the underlying beauty of this planet. As demonstrated in the thousands of species of trees and millions of types of flowers, our earth specializes in producing multiple and varied expressions of her beauty. A walk in nature is ample proof that beauty abounds for the conscious enjoyment and nurturing of all of us. Life on earth is qualitative as much as quantitative, inspiring as much as functional. The innate beauty of this planet is reflected in the multiple expressions and forms that surround us every day.

(3) Human life, equally beautiful, is especially characterized by and replete with *consciousness*. Our ability to be conscious, that is, to be aware of ourselves and everything about us is our special quality and strength. Our capacity to know ourselves and to feel life's dynamics consciously distinguishes us from other life forms and allows us a unique manner of existence in this dimension of life. Our ability to know at a conscious level allows us to interact with every aspect of earthly life in ways that are powerful, creative and inventive. The process of aware consciousness is our power, strength and uniqueness.

(4) Human beings occupy a special place in the planetary schema of life. We are a dynamic group of beings whose every thought and behavior are filled with *creative* energy. We reflect the earth's creative drives. We express this planet's creative nature by our very presence and activity here. Celebration of the creative force of earth is our job, our nature and our destiny. To create is natural on earth; to do so with our unique human capacities is an art. We human beings are such creative artists.

(5) The underlying and dominant purpose of human life on earth is to *create consciously*. Active and involved creativity is our nature and driving force. Our special role is that of creating ourselves and our world with intention, involvement, consciousness and purpose. It is our nature to enter this creative function with total dedication and purpose. To create is our human life and destiny; to express every aspect of our creative being is our fulfillment; to enjoy the fruits of our creations is our happiness. Creating life - in ourselves, in others, in our world - is the primary meaning of human life, for we bring to this earth a type of creative consciousness not found elsewhere.

(6) As mentioned earlier, we have three primary *tools* with which to perform our creative acts: power, love and consciousness. These three qualities live and express within each one of us in a special and unique way. *Power*, our ability to take charge of ourselves and our lives; *love*, our ability to relate to ourselves and others with sensitivity and intimacy; and *consciousness*, our capability to think and be aware at many levels of knowing. All these are our means of creative self-expression, self-fulfillment and self-realization.

(7) Our *interconnected life* is as meaningful as is our individual expression. Together, we are a family of related human beings. We live both as individual persons and as a united family, independent yet interdependent. As such, we are conscious creators, in our personal awareness and in our collective consciousness as well. We communicate and are bonded in an integrative and meaningful way as a united human family. While much of this bond has been relegated to the unconscious levels of our collective activity, we are nonetheless unified as well as separate beings.

Because of our interconnected bond, *we create as a family* just as we do as individuals. In fact, everything we do impacts those around us and those around the world. We interrelate, intercommunicate and interact in deep and powerful ways. As a human family, we are joined in a mutual and collaborative creative endeavor. In fact, our primary purpose as this united family is to create a world arising out of our collective spirit and expressive of our collective will. Our world is, thus, an ever-evolving manifestation of the very qualities and circumstances we collectively choose.

It is our human destiny on earth to create ourselves and to bring forth a world that is in harmony with our collective will. At this time in our evolution, we are consciously joining our wills as never before, for the specific purpose of creating a world more to our liking.

(8) We human beings are at a unique juncture in our evolution as a human race. Specifically, we have evolved our consciousness to the point where we are aware of *our power and right* to create as a human family. Just as the American colonies of two-hundred years ago used their collective will to create an integrative venture called the United States, so now is our world calling upon that same will to form a more united human consciousness.

We are at a unique crossroads in human history. We are finally ready to join our individual strengths and skills for the sake of creating our destiny together. While this process is still in its beginning stages, it nonetheless exists as an ingrained part of our human will. We have unleashed a deep-level potential for bringing ourselves consciously together into a dynamic and creative venture.

(9) Human *destiny* is expressing in a more and more dynamic and evident way. Could it be that our evolving consciousness is leading us to a fuller expression of our underlying human purpose? Is it possible that we have been unknowingly pursuing the creation of a unified world, and filling it with the ingredients necessary for our personal and collective fulfillment? Can it be that our intended human destiny is being completed in and through the ways that we are designing a new world?

Human destiny is at work in our collective will. We have begun a new phase in our evolutionary pattern. After centuries of functioning as independent nations, races, cultures and individuals, we are finally committing to a world of collective collaboration. We are uniting our minds and wills – not just unconsciously, as we have done in the past, but also in conscious and more committed ways - for the formation of a new world order.

Such a trend is indeed a manifestation of our destiny, the next logical step in a humanity dedicated to self-realization and unfoldment. This is our opportunity to create ourselves anew, not just as a group of individuals respecting each other's privacy and space, but also as a unified and dedicated family fashioning our world together.

(10) This *new world* has the possibility of a fresh and distinctive look. Assuming the truth of our evolving oneness, what will such a harmonious collaboration produce? The following constitutes my personal vision of what is *possible* because of our unified consciousness.

I see a world of human beings, all of whom are more and more aware of themselves, their purposes and their roles in relation to this world. I see a growing openness on each person's part to participate cooperatively and interdependently with others. More specifically, I envision a world of intermingling and interacting societies, cultures, races and persons, willing to move beyond arbitrary barriers and to embrace global unity. I also see each person and culture more aware and expressive of their natural beauty, quality and individuality.

Every member of our human family - whether as an individual, a nation or a culture - will become a more committed, dedicated participant in the actualization of our collective destiny. Eventually, we will fill our earth with aware and involved contributors to our creation of a new human world. Consciousness is our key ingredient in this jointly willed and desired creation. Thus, our new world consciousness will be characterized by openness, tolerance and mutual respect. This consciousness will become the mind-set that will underlie and impact our new world order.

The *new world order* will look like this:

- ❑ social structures, business and government organizations that support and enhance our individual differences, while also promoting our unified goals.
- ❑ Beliefs and ideologies that are both respectful of our diversity and celebrating of each person's and culture's uniqueness.
- ❑ Dedication to international and interpersonal peace, as a platform and springboard for more effective and meaningful relationships.
- ❑ Commitment to the well being and prosperity of every member of our

human race.

☐ An increased sense of participation in and celebration of our earth's natural goods and gifts.

A feeling of oneness with all life, everywhere.

This new world is definitely within the scope and power of our human family. In fact, each one of us is already actively participating in the beginnings of its development. This is indeed our world, and we are incorporating a more complete and unified human consciousness in its making every day.

By bringing our spirit, energy, mythical powers and capacity to create our reality onto their intended oneness - that is, by unifying them into a natural harmonious focus - we all can, and shall, create our future with intention, will and vision.

What's Your Vision?

The above pictures express my particular vision, accrued from my years of experiencing this planet and its human population. It, of course, does not constitute ultimate truth, but rather my own particular version of that truth. Whether these descriptions of our human nature are true, or even whether they speak meaningfully to you, is not the important factor.

It is more important that this perception of life moves you to discover and embrace your own vision. In truth, your personal vision is more important than that of anyone else, because in and through it you create your own world and put your personal touch on our collective endeavors.

What, then, is your vision? Remember, what happens in your world contributes to the benefit of us all as well as to yourself. Through your vision, you impact and empower your human family in some concrete way, since we all are creating our future together, step by step, day by day. The quality and degree of your personal consciousness is contagious; we are the benefactors. Your beliefs, your thoughts, your dreams and your intentions make a tangible contribution to our global destiny.

Your personal vision is equally important for yourself as well. Your own brand of inspiration deserves, even requires, its life and expression - through your vision. Your sense of personal purpose and meaning for your life is no accident; it springs from your depths and fills your awareness with a profound sense of your personal power. Your vision allows you the latitude and breadth with which to express yourself, invent your world, and find your fulfillment. It is your personal vision that opens you to the possibility of life's hidden treasures.

Your visionary self is a dynamic partner in our collective production of human life. You are an important piece of our collaborative earthly puzzle, and a main character in our unfolding human play. Whether you remain isolated at home or function as a world leader, you are an integral part of our meaningful creation of life on earth. Your personal dream, vision and will contribute powerfully to your world, and to ours. Your vision matters. What, then, is your vision?

CHAPTER 8

CREATING: EXPRESSING OUR BEAUTY

We are a human family, developed from a sacred beginning and living out a powerful existence. Every step in our development and every movement of our consciousness are evidence of our dynamic and purposeful nature. The human race is an earthly life form, evolved with a never-ending creative power, and endowed with immense qualities for expressing that power fully.

Our human family is unique on this planet. Unlike the consciousness of other forms of life, we ponder our existence; we feel a sense of purpose; we have the capacity for deep and reflective awareness. This depth of consciousness on our part is both meaningful and purposeful. Our capacity to think, reflect and be aware - of ourselves, of each other, of life, of *everything* - constitutes a unique basis for living and experiencing earthly life.

Other life forms express their creative nature more instinctually and impulsively, while we actually participate consciously in the creative processes behind this more instinctual activity. Each person on earth is naturally endowed with the power of creative thought, personal decision making and free will - all qualities that involve us directly and responsibly in a dynamic adventure of creative living.

Other life forms on earth - animals, sea life, plants and trees, for example - express their created beauty naturally, by inherent design and without conscious thought. These life forms are free to express the beauty of life in their unique and individual way, without having to decide how, and without involving themselves in the question, "Who am I, and how should I create?"

We, on the other hand, are gifted with an additional power: the power to make decisions, to take charge of our future, to co-create our world according to our personal and collective will. This power of human consciousness is indeed immense and awesome.

Few other life forms would perhaps even want such a power. We who have inherited it, however, involve ourselves in its use at every moment of our activity. Like it or not (and some of us truly do not), we have a unique role to play on our planet: the role of *co-creator* of our destiny.

It is our prerogative to say yes or no to our every natural drive or desire. Each of us has an inherent veto power over our innate creative directions. Indeed, these natural creative urges have no choice but to flow through our minds - our personal centers of decision making - before they express into reality. Subconsciously as well as consciously, these natural energies are approved by our personal decision making processes before they move into outward expression.

We are entrusted, if you will, with this power - the power to decide our life and our fate. You and I are decisive, willful, choice-making beings on an earth boasting no other such conscious beings. Every person alive is in charge of his or her own person, life and decisions; we decide our own direction, purpose and destiny. We choose, in a vastly elaborate and interactive pattern, every aspect of our lives, both consciously and unconsciously. There is no such phenomenon as victimization, for it is we who decide how to undergo and play out every particular role of our lives, even if it is that of being a victim.

You are in charge. It's your life, your person, your world. If there is some aspect of yourself that you don't care for, and if you feel moved to create it anew, you are free to initiate the changes necessary to alter it. Yes, it may take work and time, but it's your privilege, and your right. You can create yourself and your circumstances, within the broad confines of your personal possibilities, as you see fit. This power and freedom are indeed quite different from that of a plant, for example; the plant also expresses beauty, power, individuality and creativity, but without your special gift of conscious, involved choice.

It is my impression, after many years of watching people struggle with their personal growth, that most of us do not embrace this creative power of choice with open arms. I have seen most people sticking their toes into the waters of decision making, then pulling them out and waiting for someone or something else to make the water temperature more comfortable before deciding to take charge. Most of us are willing to make decisive choices about ourselves and our lives only so long as it does not result in too much personal discomfort or pain. At the point of perceived pain, most of us back off and wait for a better day.

Decision making, nonetheless, is one of our most identifiable and dynamic qualities. It's what makes us human beings special on this planet; it's what distinguishes us from other forms of life and gives us our unique mark. It is not in our design to shrink from this choice-filled consciousness, but to embrace it and use it as our creative power. Imagine what life would be like if all of us, without exception, acted forthright, with full awareness and conviction. The tangible effect, of course, would be that we would experience less frustration, stress or confusion. In fact, if we all took charge of ourselves in this manner, we would be enjoying the fruits of this gift of free will rather than feeling ambivalent about it.

We were given this gift of choice *in order to enjoy our human and earthly life* more fully! Not to create more conflict, indecision or pain. Can you imagine a gift more complimentary to and honoring of us all than to be asked to share in the authority and decision making aspects of our world? What an honor we have at our very fingertips! Actually, each one of us is a co-creative and co-decisive conscious being. We have within ourselves complete power to take definite charge of every aspect of our self and life. Personally and collectively, we are endowed with immeasurable powers to create a world to our liking, despite any seeming obstacles. We are truly masters of our destiny and framers of our future; as such, we face no barriers big or strong enough to deter us from fulfilling our creative will.

Imagine yourself being totally in charge of your life. With this consciousness, identify what you want to change so your life will be more pleasurable, more fulfilling, more productive. Once precised, these changes begin to be processed through your deeper levels of awareness; and the results begin to express into your life with direction and purpose. There is nothing that is outside your free will, your decisive will, your creative will. Clearly, you are in charge.

Let's look anew at our basic nature as human beings. I believe that a deeper understanding of who we are *by nature* sheds light on most of the complex questions we ask ourselves. Who are we as created and creative persons on earth? What is our basic human nature here, and what is our natural way to use our creative gifts and talents?

My experience with the thousands of human beings I have known in a variety of contexts has left me with a deep sense of our innate magnificence. I have come to believe that our human core, or essence, is one of immense beauty and splendor. More comprehensively, I see our entire human family as expressive of a dynamic spirit, a powerful energy, a vast realm of creative possibilities, a capacity for almost limitless realities. My vision of humanity is characterized by an overwhelming concept of the wonder, elegance and mystery of this remarkable race.

What I see in our human nature is this: we are a race (group, family) of beings who have immense depth and quality in our make-up. We are filled with dynamic energies of power, love and consciousness. We are driven by a forceful and creative will. We are in total charge of our lives and circumstances. We can love, feel, think and touch; we can take charge, be conscious, be receptive and learn. We can perform a vast array of creative acts from a wealth of personal strengths.

What a splendid creation we are! For us not to be impressed with our magnificence is unimaginable; indeed, for us to think we are shameful, unworthy or untrustworthy simply ignores a more underlying truth of our basic nature: we are beautiful, wondrous and special life forms on an earth that nurtures and supports our uniqueness in every way imaginable.

The above paragraphs describe my view of our basic and natural human state. In my years as a transformer of human consciousness, I have become aware that most of us have simply forgotten this underlying truth about ourselves. Both personally and collectively, we have placed our conscious awareness on what's wrong with us more than on what's right about us. Our learned value judgments about the dualistic patterns of life have left us quick to ignore our inherent beauty, and eager to emphasize our seeming faults.

How ludicrous it is that we have chosen to use our free will to condemn ourselves, our motives or our behavior! Isn't it strange that we have come to judge our human qualities as bad, unhealthy or unacceptable? I personally believe that there is little justification for such condemnation. In my opinion, we are an enormously talented, creative and productive family of human beings. I see most of us using our talents earnestly, to create the best possible personal and collective world.

Yes, we often make decisions that are detrimental to ourselves and each other; and certainly we involve ourselves in choices and directions that are sometimes less optimal for our growth. Yet, to lock our focus onto such realities, while overlooking our more basic state of beauty, only pulls our consciousness deeply - and unhappily - into unproductive and self-perpetuating preoccupation with negative judgment.

We are, in truth, a marvelous and magical people. Our human family is, from its created inception to its present evolved form, filled with attributes that are spiritually and mythically alive, creatively energized, and capable of enormous effects. As such, we are a completely respectable and honorable life expression, with dynamic creative talents and deep sensitivities to all life. Current evaluations that human beings are a destructive, insensitive and hurtful people do not, in my opinion, warrant a primary place of attention in our modern culture.

We human beings are currently bringing our focus back into harmony with the reality of our created nature. Having been historically less focused on our underlying beauty, we are now re-connecting with the memory of our sacred and precious heritage. At this time of new possibilities for our human family, we are again awakening to the deeper knowledge of who we are. How important this memory is, for our future as a family of humankind depends on the decisions we make; and those decisions, in turn, depend on our vision of ourselves and our beliefs about what we deserve. We deserve a world that corresponds to our inherent human worthiness: a world of harmony and beauty, a world of dedicated peace, a world of mutual respect, and a world of creative fulfillment.

Can we create such a world? If we believe that we deserve it, we can. If we are committed to allowing our innate beauty to express externally in our world, we can. As long as we allow our wondrous nature a central place in our focus, we can and will produce an outer world that corresponds to that inner beauty.

The deciding factor, of course, is our perception of ourselves, our definition of who we are, our concept of our basic nature. If we see ourselves as worthwhile, then we will naturally put energy and effort into creating a world fit for such special persons. If not, we won't. Again, it is the self-fulfilling prophesy: what we focus on, comes to life.

I have known police and probation officers who, after years of dealing with criminals and anti-social persons, developed attitudes of suspicion and negativity toward everyone. Their concept of our human nature became focused on our faults, and they created antagonistic attitudes and non-trusting relationships in their lives. Likewise, many of us have grown up hearing judgments about what's wrong with us more than the reverse; no wonder, then, that we have internalized such thinking into our own consciousness.

The difference is this: we are not stuck with such thoughts or value judgments. We are free to make our own judgments about who we are, free to take charge of our own person as we see fit, free to change within ourselves what we deem is appropriate. Above all, we are free. Surely, it takes some effort and time, but creative change can be achieved by every person who is reading this book, without exception. No fear or learned anxiety, no depressing life event or present conflict, has any power over you.

You are the master of yourself and your life, from beginning to end; you're totally in charge of your consciousness; you can change anything. In fact, you can create the exact kind of life that you choose; this is your gift, your power, your destiny. Nothing stands in your way, except your own adopted belief that you can't do it.

This discussion of our power and freedom brings us back to the key role played by our natural beauty. Most of us base our creations on an "automatic pilot" approach to life rather than on a conscious awareness of who we are. I continue to emphasize my vision of our humanity as a race steeped in beauty and splendor, because our underlying feelings about ourselves are such a dominant factor in influencing our creations.

It's not important that you accept my vision of your human self. Rather, it is your personal view and belief about yourself that is your most powerful tool in constructing a meaningful life. I invite you to love yourself as a basically worthwhile, deserving and beautiful person. Yet, how much more powerful for you to evolve your own definitions and concepts of yourself, even if those concepts differ from mine!

How powerful it is to become consciously aware of our feelings and assumptions about ourselves! Each of us has the capacity for such awareness, as well as an ever-increasing dedication to embrace it more fully. Once we become aware of our self definitions, they are reflected in our external decisions and creations more directly than indirectly, more consciously than unconsciously. Our clarity about ourselves expresses immediately - in the form of more conscious and responsible decisions, more control of our lives, and ever increasing self-fulfillment.

To create life as an expression of our innate human beauty is the ultimate of all creations, the most meaningful possible expression of ourselves. The human race is not constructed to create life primarily from a place of personal or interpersonal struggle. In fact, such pain-based creations always involve stress, conflict and hard work; at the end, we are tired, worn down and unimpressed with our creations.

On the contrary, it is our created and creative nature to celebrate our basic beauty. That's right, celebration of every aspect of earth's life is a natural and driving force in our human make-up. The most meaningful way of spending time on earth is that of creatively celebrating our planet's abundance, beauty and splendor.

Our earth is a plane of existence built on the themes of life, energy and creativity. We are an active part of her ever-unfolding array of these dynamic qualities; we enjoy and are fulfilled by our participation in these abundant attributes. To celebrate life, to experience energies, and to

enjoy life's creative opportunities - these are indeed underlying and primary ingredients in our human and earthly experience. Why should it not be so?

Remember that most religious teachings and scriptures reflect a similar theme: that we are created perfect, and commissioned to enjoy the fruits of the earth. Nothing has changed, except the fact that most of us have forgotten our "perfect" nature and our creative commission.

In truth, we still have the capacity to embrace and enjoy our natural state. Do you want to celebrate our earth's gifts of life and creation, or would you prefer to continue struggling with our learned value judgments, and never quite get around to this grand celebration?

Of course, this question implies an obvious answer on the side of enjoying earth's splendor. I am not being overly simplistic in asserting that we can, in fact, create the kind of life experience we want. Earth has had many examples of persons who are truly happy and at peace; people who have taken charge of their lives; leaders who have demonstrated freedom, both personally and in their leadership of others. These individuals give us ample evidence of our innate power to choose. This is freedom.

From my personal experience, I have concluded that even our meaningful approaches to growth and freedom can sometimes be more stressful than freeing. These approaches can become reinforcing not of our intended growth, but of the very processes that we use to attain that growth. I have seen many people become so dedicated to their freedom that they have committed years, even decades, to processes, practices, therapies or programs for its accomplishment. So often, the result has been a self-reinforcing pattern of projects, but not the very freedom they initially set out to accomplish. Ironically, they deluded themselves into believing that every step got them closer to freedom, when in fact it served mainly to perpetuate their ongoing processes.

What is the alternative? Again, it depends on who you perceive yourself to be. If you perceive that you are someone who has to engage in processes before growth can happen, then, indeed, such an approach is important for you - the self-fulfilling prophesy. Yet, the assumption that underlies this perception is that your power is in doing processes, not in actually getting free.

What would happen if every one of us would decide simply to reclaim our innate freedom and to re-experience our beauty, rather than to continue working hard to achieve it? What a different personal and collective consciousness we would create in such a decision! What a world of new possibilities we would open ourselves to in allowing such a bold leap into freedom!

Let's look anew at creating our world based on our personal and collective beauty. We have every right - in fact, it is part of our innermost nature - to create. To construct our lives and world based on a deep conviction about our wondrous state can only result in a reality that is powerful, sensitive and fulfilling. Owning our right to experience happiness will necessarily result in more fluid processes that allow us a fuller experience of that very happiness. Experiencing ourselves as innately lovable and deserving naturally orients us toward creating the tangible means of realizing and fulfilling this worthwhile nature.

Creativity is a dynamic and ingenious human exercise. Our feelings, our awareness and our decisions are powerful ingredients in our creative expression of life. As creators, we use every emotion, inspiration and thought as our tools; in this way we take active charge of every situation, every process, every event. Whether we choose to be consciously aware of this creative involvement or not, we are dedicated and committed creators of our world; we have total control over each event and movement in our lives. We function as the architects and the engineers of our lives. We are the instigators and energizers of our personal and global destiny.

Creating life from a solid awareness of our beauty means that we allow a deep sense of our worth to influence our every activity. We bring our deepest convictions about what we deserve into play, as we bring about the realities of our lives. We allow and empower our feelings of self-love to be a dominant factor in our every expressive experience. In short, we create our external life circumstances in conformity to our internal feelings about ourselves and our convictions about what we deserve.

What would you choose to be your personal creations? Whether for yourself, for another or for our world, what would a life based on your beliefs about who you - and we - are look like? Do you envision creating a world of inner peace for yourself? Or an outer life dedicated to a particular achievement and accomplishment? Or a close relationship of meaningful intimacy? Or a human world based on peace and international harmony? Or a condition of just "being," in which you are quietly enjoying being alive? Your decision - whether it is to accomplish one of these effects or something entirely different - will find its most meaningful fulfillment when it is rooted in and expressive of your human beauty.

My own vision is this: you are a wondrous and unique powerhouse of dynamic human qualities, and you deserve every possible personal happiness and fulfillment. My desire for you is this: that you empower your decisions and actions, so that this underlying vision of yourself will find its external expression in your life.

What about you? What is your vision of yourself? What is your sense of what you deserve? In addition, how do you view your underlying power to create what you want? Do you believe that you can actually fulfill your dreams, or do you feel that you must work toward it for years and years? Are you simply a worker bee, blindly directed by the dictates of our collective consciousness? Or, are you ready to own your beautiful nature as the queen bee of your life, filled with the power to create your future as you see fit?

There is much talk these days about the value and importance of self-love. We all generally agree that loving ourselves is a prerequisite to a balanced and productive life. Side by side with this focus on self-love, many people strongly believe that we must go back and heal damage done to us when a child or in our earlier years. I disagree. While for some of us such an approach is indeed loving and healing, for many it is needless torture. Those who expose themselves to enormous, sometimes overwhelming pain from their childhoods do so under the assumption that this painful ritual is the necessary route to personal healing and freedom. Of course, because they believe it to be so, it is - to a degree. Most of the time, however, those who engage in this arduous process emerge from it only partially healed and free, not fully.

Why is such a process only partly healing for most of us? Why don't these healing rituals, theoretically liberating and empowering, do the total job of freeing us from our pain? It's simply because they are based on a deeper assumption: that we are weak and struggling searchers, vulnerable to the power of others, who must overcome many obstacles in order to take charge of our lives. Thus, once we get partially better through the process of, for example, "healing the inner child," this deeper assumption takes over and presents us again with our feelings of powerlessness.

What holds you - and the rest of us - back from proclaiming to yourself once and for all that you're beautiful, lovable and healthy? What keeps us from knowing that we have every internal power we need to handle all possible circumstances in life? What keeps us from owning that we - and no one else - are the directors and producers of our lives? Nothing.

Isn't it finally time that we collectively make a decision to take charge of ourselves and our world? Don't we deserve to believe that we can be, and are, in charge of our destiny? Certainly. Are we ready to own our power to create our world in the fashion and style that express our underlying beauty? Yes, indeed!

Our beauty as human beings is our most basic asset and endearing quality. The underlying splendor of our human nature, coupled with our exciting role as co-creators of life, serves as a dynamic stage on which to celebrate ourselves and our earth. This planet is the ideal and perfect playground on which to enjoy our creative purposes.

Let's join our spirits, our energies, our mythical inventiveness, and our powerful minds into an integrated and committed force - for the purpose of enjoying our earthly life. Let's allow a deeply rooted sense of our worth to lift us to creations unheard of up to now. Let's dedicate ourselves to creating our world as an expression of our human beauty!

CHAPTER 9

YOU AS CREATOR

You are, indeed, the creator of your personal universe, that is, of your self and the world in which you live. Every moment of life is made up of choices for your creative mind to ponder. Each circumstance implies options and invitations for your free will to consider and choose. Every interaction is filled with possibilities for new attitudes and behaviors. Qualitatively as well as quantitatively, your daily living is filled with thousands of choices, some of them made subconsciously, many of them made consciously.

Our focus in this chapter is on your becoming the most aware, most dynamic and most powerful creator of life possible. Specifically, I invite you to investigate a vast, fourfold world of creative power: a world inspired by your innermost wisdom (spirit); filled with an array of limitless possibilities (myth); propelled by your love of your and our beauty (energy); and involving you in many creative self expressions (reality). Participating strongly in this world of creative experience moves us quickly into a much more powerful role: that of becoming more conscious and responsible creators of life.

In inviting you to this creative fullness, I want to look anew at the four dynamic worlds of human consciousness: the arenas of spirit, myth, energy and reality. Through this fourfold consciousness we live, take charge of and enjoy life's many challenges. In Chapter One, we viewed these four worlds more as perspectives - that is, as windows through which to look at life. In Chapter Two, we saw them more as gifts, as sources of inner power. Here, we look at each world as an arena for our dynamic creative activity. Let's look at these four worlds in this fresh way.

The World of Spirit

Our most underlying and core inner world is that of essence or spirit. At this deepest level of consciousness, we live in a world of true peace, where everything "just is." No duality, no negatives or positives. We experience everything in this inner world as our purest source: our source of wisdom, of love, of vision - of everything.

Our spiritual essence constitutes a dynamic inner force that inspires and gives life to our total being. The world of spirit is our strength, our higher power, and our most basic source of energy. It feeds our creative nature and empowers our sense of self as an alive and vital being. Indeed, our deepest sense of meaning and purpose resides herein, in this dynamic world of inner spirit.

We are not simply passive recipients of the gifts of this spiritual source. We are also spiritual creators. Even when we consciously feel disconnected from this world of spirit, it still serves as a source of powerful creative activity in our lives. Spirit certainly inspires our conscious self to take charge of our lives; yet, it also functions as its own arena of creative endeavor.

For example, how many people have you known who entered a new phase of their lives not by personal design, but because it "just happened?" These people did not consciously create a change of their life circumstances; their deeper spirit - their inner source of wisdom - did so. Sometimes a loss of a job - for no apparent reason - in turn opens up unexpected possibilities for a new opportunity in life. Likewise, the loss of a loved one, despite the understandable pain involved, often coincides with a beginning of a different way of living life.

Our spirit usually creates the major shifts and movements in our lives. Not by accident, most of us can view our lives like chapters in a book, with each chapter beginning and ending with a significant event or change in our life circumstances. I believe that most of these changes are engineered from a deeper place in our consciousness, a place where the general blueprint and path of our life are known and activated. This is the nature and role of our spirit.

Our spiritual essence sees the bigger picture of our life. Like an informed computer program, our all-knowing spirit moves - or inspires us consciously to move - the chess pieces of our life in the most appropriate way at each major moment.

It's not just that we are passive receptacles of an inner divine presence. In addition, we are co-creative participants with this presence. Our spiritual consciousness is an arena of immense creative activity, and each of us is an active part of this activity. We are as much a part of this core world of spiritual creativity as we are of our more observable world of conscious activity. Because our spirit is our innermost place of such creative inspiration, we can justifiably call ourselves spiritual beings and embrace a spiritual purpose in life. It is here - in the world of spirit - that we live our most dynamic life, feel our clearest inspiration, and recognize our oneness with all life.

Spirit, our innermost world of consciousness, continually invites us to identify with and use its creative powers. While in the examples of life changes above I inferred that they "just happened", it also can be said that *we create these major shifts* at our deepest level of consciousness - that is, from our creative spiritual source.

It is certainly valid to perceive that God or some other spiritual force (e.g. angels, etc.) is creating the events in and around us. It is equally valid - and personally empowering - for us to own this activity as a part of our own creative responsibility. In that we are innately one with our divine source, and in that we are intended to be co-creators with that source, it is certainly appropriate to claim personal partnership with the activity of our spirit.

In so doing, we allow our conscious selves to become more aware of, and involved in, our spiritual creations. We align ourselves with those creations rather than perceive ourselves as separate from them. It is hardly blasphemy to join our consciousness with that of God, for indeed at the level of spirit we are living in oneness and harmony with this creative force at all times. In claiming our oneness with the activities and inspiration of our spirit, we are simply owning the power that is our natural birthright - the power to create.

The World of Myth

We create myths every day and every night. Our daydreams - through our more poetic and free-flowing imagination - bring the meaningful creative activity of our "unconscious" mind into our conscious view. These daydreams, and other right-brained processes, allow our ever-active deeper thoughts to move into our conscious mind in the way they know best: through the language of symbols. Through this powerful pictorial process, we become more fully aware of the events and creations of our meaning-filled world of myth.

In like manner, our sleep-based dreams reflect the same powerful creations of our deeper consciousness. Again using the language of symbols, our dreams produce for us a meaningful display of our important inner processes. Such a phenomenon - that of dreaming - represents our dedicated way of inter-connecting our conscious awareness and our creative world of mythical activity.

Myths are powerful creations. Whether in fairy-tale form, in movies or in metaphors, we create and live out meaningful myths every day. While our conscious mind is busy focusing on the tangible world of "reality," the equally important world of mythical activity is being dynamically lived out in our deeper consciousness.

We express these mythical creations in many ways - through dreaming, imagination and streams of consciousness, to name just a few. People deprived of dreaming, research shows, quickly lose their sense of reality orientation. The world of myth is essential and helpful to the ways we deal with the more real world. Without our creative world of myth, our lives could not have the balance or fulfillment necessary for meaningful experience.

The world of unconscious myth-making, then, constitutes an essential creative process for all of us. This is the inner world wherein we derive most of our religious beliefs and values. Often, these beliefs have little rootedness in our world of reality. For instance, the Christian belief that Jesus saved humanity from its sins through his death and resurrection can hardly be classified as a totally rational or reality-based belief. Yet, Christians validly embrace this belief because it speaks meaningfully and symbolically to our deeper need for hope and freedom.

Most of our beliefs are a blend of the rational and non-rational. Notice, for example, how many hold tightly to their biases and prejudices in the face of solid scientific or rational proof of their inaccuracy. Why? In short, because those biases leave them feeling secure or protected at this level of mythical activity.

My point is this: why not simply admit that we live partly in a world of less rational, mythically meaningful and somewhat illogical thoughts and beliefs? Why not own this phenomenon as a natural part of our human functioning? If we would simply acknowledge the central role of this mythical world, we would save ourselves the necessity of denying our natural irrationality, allow ourselves the right to laugh at ourselves, and open the door to taking more conscious charge of these heretofore unconscious myths.

Becoming more aware of our mythical creations and more actively involved in their symbolic meaning allows us to enjoy the process of creativity rather than feel like a passive recipient of their effects. Also, the act of becoming more fully a part of our myths gives us the right to claim them as our own, and to experience ourselves as the actual creators of these important myths.

Why is it important for us to take ownership of these creative myths? Not to do so results in our feeling either uninvolved in or disconnected from the creative activity of our beliefs and assumptions. To divorce ourselves from any aspect of our mythical life only decreases our sense of integrity and personal power.

Conversely, ownership in our myths involves us more consciously and responsibly in every creative thought and action. We become more fully integrated, whole and powerful when we are connected to the creative life of our meaningful myths.

All in all, our myths - personal and collective - are a meaningful and essential aspect of our creative purposes on earth. Owning them more consciously allows us fuller participation in their beauty, purpose and wisdom.

Doesn't it make sense then to respect our myths as a positive part of our consciousness? I have often heard people interpret their mythical creations in negative ways - for example, as expressions of personal lack, punishment or "bad karma." For example, when a person's mythical consciousness expresses creatively in the form of illness, "accident" or embarrassing behavior, that person often interprets such symbol-rich expressions as a sign that "something's wrong."

Such an interpretation is usually far from the truth. It is my experience that every symbolic creation emanating from our mythical depths - even if it involves pain or embarrassment - is created as a positive, even loving self-expression. It is created with a devotion to our person, and is placed into our conscious world as an invitation for our betterment, even though it may create pain in the process.

No matter what the appearance of our mythical creations, we produce them as a meaningful and important expression of and to our consciousness at that moment. To listen respectfully to them, open ourselves to their wisdom, and become one with their deeper meaning can only empower us to take fuller charge of our lives.

The World of Energy

We also create in and through the very energy field in which we live. Our electromagnetic or energy field is an actual arena for meaningful human expression. We communicate with ourselves and those around us not only verbally and non-verbally, but - equally important - in and through our personal energy. How often, for example, do you feel a person's "vibrations" and make a judgment about that person strictly on that basis, regardless of what that person may be verbally expressing? Our energy is a powerful communicator of our feelings and convictions, our desires and our thoughts; and we use it for such expressions on a continual basis.

Most Westerners do not focus extensively on the role of energy as a creative and expressive vehicle. Nonetheless, because we are energy-based and energy-directed beings, our feelings and emotions serve as primary expressions of our consciousness. It is our nature to feel life, to experience energies, and to create our environment in and through our energy system. Science has now developed methods and instruments with which to measure the life force or energy that radiates from living organisms.

Our every thought creates its effects through its energy, and every feeling that we experience is its own creative force. Notice also how we are naturally drawn to some people and repelled by others. This phenomenon results from a meaningful, though usually unconscious, exchange of energy between us - an energy-based communication. It is our nature to use energy as a pathway for communication and creative function.

Energy is creative. Just as we use words to express our ideas, and myths to symbolize meaningful thoughts, so also we use energy to communicate intrapersonally and interpersonally. Internally, for example, we achieve better health and vitality by changing our personal energy. Such shifting of energy is the role of pain-relieving medication for our body, of massage for our muscles, and of exercise for our cardio-vascular system. Healers of many persuasions perform their art through a conscious and intentional shifting of our energy patterns, in order to unleash more dynamic and powerful energies for our use.

Our personal and interpersonal energy expresses itself in many ways. When we're feeling stress, for example, our energy system naturally slows or shuts down, a clear message that we need to relax. Likewise, when our attitude is positive and we feel happy, our energy system instantly responds with "up" feelings. In many similar ways every day we use our energy to create experiences, messages and methods of meaningful self-expression to ourselves and those around us.

What powerful individuals we would be if we were totally in touch with this dynamic communication system! Imagine what a dramatic difference it would make were we all fully aware of the ways we can use our energy to create our lives. We have a gold mine of activity in this world of energy, enough for us to live our lives meaningfully, even if our other three worlds of activity were cut off from us.

Our energy, for example, allows us to achieve a healthy harmony and sensitivity with ourselves and others. Without the activity and expression of our personal energy system, we could not know how we feel, could not be as aware of others, and could not respond with the love that others need from us.

Some of us are by nature strongly expressive in and through the world of energy; others are naturally less oriented to use the power of this dynamic world. Our uniqueness and individuality are as much in play in the ways we create with energy as they are in every other arena of life.

Despite these natural differences, however, every one of us can become so much more dynamic and powerful by becoming aware of, interactive with, and in charge of our energy. Knowing, for example, how to use energy to communicate, how to understand our own feelings, or how to create energies in our daily activities - all of these are powerful ways of taking charge of ourselves and our lives.

The World of Reality

Our perceived world of reality is, of course, the one of which our modern societies are most aware, and in which we are most consciously creative. In this world of productive possibilities, we use logic and reason to make decisions and draw conclusions; then we create situations or projects to put these conclusions into practice. This real world is our laboratory in which to experiment with our creative talents; it is our stage on which to act out our personal role in the play of life.

Likewise, it is in our real world that we find life's more visible meanings and fulfillment. It is here, for example, that we express our innermost gifts, here that we achieve our treasured dreams. This is the world wherein we invent and discover; explore and hypothesize; judge and decipher. In looking out into this tantalizing world of expressive possibilities, we use our mental skills to uncover its secrets, decode its meanings, and discover its nature. This is the platform on which we create ourselves as individualized and interactive persons; this is the world into which we unleash and express our "real selves." Here we create relationships and interact with every aspect of life. In this world of reality, each of us is a central player in life's dynamic interplay of creative possibilities.

The world of reality is truly the most tangible and visible of all our creative expressions. It constitutes the receptive canvas onto which we, the artists, paint the pictures that are inspired at our core (spirit); borrow from our limitless resource of possibilities (myth); and that express our unique gifts and talents (energy). Our deeper three worlds - spirit, myth and energy - come together for their powerful manifestation onto this real life canvas, through our conscious creative will. No wonder, then, that we are so taken with this world of expressive beauty! It is, indeed, the perfect completion and fulfillment of our deeper and dynamic worlds of creative life.

What a miraculous system we human beings have for our creative adventures in living! We are powerful creators of life. We have access to a fourfold world of creative inspiration, drives, thought and expression - within our dynamic being. These worlds are not impersonal functions within our consciousness; they are ours to play in and to express ourselves with. These worlds express the fullness of our identity; and they constitute the whole of who we are as integrated knowers, thinkers, feelers and creators.

Doesn't it make sense, then, to identify with, own and integrate this fourfold creative power? Aren't we deserving of our original and intended intrapersonal unity? Oneness is our natural state. We are naturally integrated, both in our whole person and in the interactive interplay of our fourfold world of creative activity. To experience ourselves as one, integrated and harmonized is to re-own and regain our natural state of creation.

Our historical separation from our deeper levels of consciousness has left us focusing mostly on our world of reality and ignoring our other realms of creative activity. While such a state of disharmonized consciousness is certainly workable to a degree, it has also created in us a degree of confusion and ignorance about our own human decision making and behavior.

To connect ourselves to our deeper and fuller creative activity brings its power gradually from its assigned place in our "unconscious" into a meaningful place in our "conscious" awareness. This union of conscious and unconscious awareness re-creates our natural state - the United States of Consciousness - and invites us back into a harmonious, enjoyable and fuller experience of self.

This very phenomenon of oneness is true not only for our individual selves, but also for our collective human consciousness. Remember how I described our human race as always creating together, even though we are not usually aware of it? Actually, it is possible and natural for us - all of us - to bring the many facets of this co-creative activity from our historically unconscious realms into our conscious awareness. We can open ourselves - in fact, we are already doing so - to becoming more aware of our collective creations, and to owning them as ours. Such awareness automatically brings us into a more powerful position to continue our joint creations at a more aware state. The following chapter explores our collective power more fully.

CHAPTER 10

CONSCIOUSNESS: OUR PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE POWER

Here we are, continually creating the very world in which we live. Both as individuals and as a human family, we are in charge of planning, making decisions about, and bringing into full expression our world of reality. We produce this external world from the depths of our spirit, with the help of the immeasurable mythical possibilities that lie within our consciousness, and by drawing on our dynamic energy. These worlds of inner power coordinate and unite in each of us, for the precise purpose of bringing forth our significant external creations.

To join meaningfully in our earth's creative adventure is our nature and joy. It constitutes our primary purpose and driving force. Creating our selves and our lives, producing and directing our life's events and circumstances, taking charge of every element of our life and destiny - these activities constitute the most compelling and fulfilling quest in our human experience.

How do we create this world? With what frame of mind do we actually fashion it? What is the role of our deeper processes in influencing our external manifestations? As these questions imply, the effect of our creative activity depends on a deeper human phenomenon - that of our *consciousness*.

Our human consciousness determines both the quality of our creative experience and the nature of our creative expression. Consciousness - our values, beliefs, myths and assumptions about life and people - influences every facet of our creative experience. We all have seen people, for example, who cannot accept love because they believe that others only want to use them; or those who do not succeed in life because they perceive themselves as undeserving of success. These examples illustrate the covert power of consciousness.

Consciousness makes all the difference in how and what we create. A consciousness of fear, for example, results in a person's tiptoeing timidly through his creative process rather than feeling in charge of it. Likewise, a consciousness of power allows one to feel the confidence needed to create a purposeful and meaningful reality. All of us create the varied realities of our lives out of our deeper beliefs and attitudes; this is consciousness.

In daily living, it is our consciousness that determines the nature, scope and boundaries of our life circumstances. Usually at more unconscious than conscious levels, we daily go about the business of fashioning every aspect of our reality - we decide the nature of our needs and aspirations, and we determine the ways to get these needs met in the real world. We focus on our life purpose and set up the circumstances to bring about its accomplishment. It is within our personal consciousness that every event of our lives is devised, engineered and initiated.

Consciousness is perhaps our most potent tool in creating life here on earth. Remember the theory that "nothing happens by accident?" Given the key and pervasive role played by our human consciousness, this statement is indeed true. From the depths of our personal consciousness, we are ever aware of the necessities and needs of our lives. Because of this active aspect of self, we are intentionally dedicated to fulfilling these needs. At every moment of our lives, our powerful consciousness goes about the work of dynamic creative expression.

Our innermost beliefs, myths and dreams constitute the core of what we call our consciousness. Our deepest definitions, assumptions and interpretations of life form our personal battery of dynamic tools for dealing with and bringing about our reality. These inner processes - our values, orientations and concepts - are meaningful and purposeful helps in our daily self expression. This broad inner system of thought mechanisms is our most powerful ally in productive human living. Consciousness - the "think tank" and computer system of our dynamic self - facilitates our masterful living of life's possibilities.

Best of all, *each of us is in charge of our consciousness*. We are neither passive victims of our inner whims, nor are we simply pawns acting out the dictates of a consciousness from which we are disconnected. We are one with, and in charge of, our consciousness, period. It's our tool, a gift given us at birth, and ours to develop and nurture throughout life. Its beliefs, attitudes and assumptions are ours to manage, fulfill and, when appropriate, change. Just as a parent exercises responsibility for his or her child, molding and guiding that child through the various phases of growth, so too are all of us designed to take total responsibility for our own consciousness.

Isn't it a marvelous power that we all have inherited as human beings? Here we are, destined for meaningful self expression; empowered with the tools to create every aspect of our life; and, finally, blessed with a consciousness to accomplish this adventure in accord with our personal will! Isn't this an absolutely powerful phenomenon?

The best part is that we're in charge! Regardless of the underlying reason for this arrangement, its dynamic power is that we are co-creators of every aspect of our human world. Because of the dynamism of our consciousness, we can participate fully in every moment and phase of our creative process, from birth to death. Through the power of our consciousness, we are wondrously in charge of our life, in its every detail.

Everything in life is created by us, both personally and in collaboration with others. Surely, to the Western mind this assertion - that we create every circumstance of our life - might seem grossly exaggerated at first glance. Most people assign unpleasant life events or circumstances to God, accident, fate or some other force external to their own choice-making.

Yet, each of us is connected dynamically to all those "external" forces, through the power of our consciousness. We co-create every life event in oneness with each one of these seemingly external forces. Thus, we can conclude that we all are participating in some meaningful and personal way in every event of our existence. Whether this conclusion strikes you as accurate or not, you and I are certainly in charge of ourselves, our lives and our destinies far more than we have allowed ourselves to realize.

Consciousness, our primary tool in the creative management of our lives, permits us to take whatever approach to living we deem right for ourselves. Because of the power of the various facets of our consciousness, we all are in a unique position to decide our personal and collective destiny.

History and folklore are filled with accounts of heroes and dreamers, inventors and adventurers who have accomplished remarkable feats, far beyond the expectations of their peers, simply because they dared to believe in their dreams. Each of us is capable of exactly the same quality of accomplishment, whether externally in one's life creations or in the inner worlds of one's "self" - through the power of consciousness.

We experience only the limits that our individual consciousness places on our creative efforts. Our consciousness, if limited in its beliefs or attitudes, might call our dreams unrealistic or our drives unhealthy. While our consciousness is our most precious tool for creating a dynamic life, it can also allow us to feel conflict, indecision or denial in relation to our inner wisdom. Yet, that very consciousness is our responsibility, our creation, our tool. Its nature and condition are in our hands. It is not some dictating or rigid authority figure dominating our choices; it is *us*.

Consciousness, then, is our greatest human asset; beyond that fact, consciousness is you and I. We are in charge of every instance of our self, circumstances and destiny. No other "truth" is as important in the living of one's personal life, or in the creation of our collective world. *We are in charge*. It's our show here on earth.

Surely, we've inherited a human tradition that believes in perpetrator-victim, right-wrong, good guys-bad guys; but that's only one style of consciousness. We don't have to believe this version of belief unless we decide that it makes personal sense to do so.

Indeed, wouldn't it make more sense to embrace a consciousness of power rather than one of powerlessness? Wouldn't it feel more realistic and effective to draw upon the convictions and possibilities of our personal inspiration than to rely on orientations that are not of our conscious choosing?

Let's apply these ideas to you and to the ways you are creating your life. Then, let's focus on the role of consciousness in creating your future. Do you personally believe that you have the right to take total charge of every aspect of your life? Or, do you believe that other forces are more in charge of your choices? Have you trained your consciousness to serve your personal will, or do you feel more like a slave to the dictates of the consciousness you have inherited? How much do you embrace the power of your own spirit, the possibilities of your own myths, and the tools of your personal energy, as you decide the specifics of your personal life?

Collective Consciousness: Our Hidden Power

From a broader perspective, let's look at the ways we create our lives and our future as a human family. Consciousness plays an equally powerful role in our collective psyche as it does in our individual self. In that we human beings are both individuals and a collective entity, we co- create our life together as well as separately.

In this sense, we can compare ourselves to the cells in the human body. On the one hand, each of the body's cells is individual, independent and uniquely functioning; on the other hand, every cell is simultaneously interconnected, interdependent and collaboratively dedicated to the health of the entire body. Our human body needs each cell to "do its own thing" and thrive independently, but such individuality has its strength and purpose only in the context of the larger, more integrated body.

In the same way, each one of us is necessarily independent and in charge of his and her personal reality, while at the same time oriented toward the life and wholeness of our entire human race.

It is in this sense that we are one. We human beings function not only as a race of independent persons, but also as a unified and interconnected family. We are a united consciousness, a collaborative partnership and a collective body of humankind.

This perception of ourselves - as a global body and a bonded identity - is becoming a more integral part of our human consciousness. In more recent phases of our history, we had trained our consciousness to focus on the primacy of the individual; we are now beginning to see ourselves as a meaningfully interconnected unit. We are perceiving that we function as a whole just as powerfully and intentionally as we do individually. We are truly a body of interrelated and interdependent persons who function as meaningfully in our united state as we do in our individualized state.

What this means is that we all create our world together, in and through a deeply rooted and unified consciousness. We are dedicated not only to each person's individual fulfillment, but also - and increasingly - to our collective fullness. Notice, for example, our developing awareness of the relatedness and importance of nations and cultures, of races and religions, and of families and communities. We have entered a time wherein, especially through our technologies and economics, we are joining ourselves together into a bonded and cooperative "body" of human systems and relationships. Our present era is one dedicated to increasing our awareness of this oneness, that is, of our unified consciousness.

We are shifting our attention outward, beyond our individual identities, to include and embrace our "collective self." We are recognizing that true wholeness and fulfillment come from feeling identified with our total human dimension and identity.

Individual fulfillment can derive only partially from focus on the self as a separate entity. Only when we experience the harmony of the whole do we arrive at the fulfillment of the individual. Likewise, only when our human identity includes the whole human race will we be able to claim complete responsibility for the world in which we live.

We human beings are on the brink of a phenomenal new creation: the perception of ourselves as a unified body, a blended family, an integrated consciousness. We are about to create - or re-create - in our modern consciousness the realization of our oneness.

The process of this creation is in gear, and is moving purposefully ahead. Every human being alive is being nudged and motivated, by the very collective consciousness of which he and she is a part, to experience oneself as a meaningful part of a whole, that is, in intentional unison with all other planetary life. Our collective sensitivity to each other and to our living environment is growing at a dynamic rate. We are dedicating ourselves to a growing interaction and collaboration with each other, with a consciousness of unity never before present in recorded history.

Our innate oneness takes nothing away from any person's individuality. The balance between individuality and unity is expressed vividly in the cellular activity of our human body. Each cell is indeed independent and responsible for its own functioning; yet it is also an active part of a bigger reality. By its very nature, that cell moves and functions in collaboration with other cells for the good of the whole body. Both functions - that of the individual and that of the whole - take place at one and the same time, usually without disharmony or opposition.

We human beings are no different. Even though our consciousness has been focused primarily on our individual functioning, each one of us has been equally cooperating with other human beings toward the good of the whole - simply by being himself and herself. Likewise, just as our bodily cells have no rational awareness of their collaborative functioning, so also are most of us ignorant of the covert yet powerful ways we are contributing to the good of our human family - until now.

Until now. More and more, we are bringing our deeply imbedded knowledge of our inherent oneness into our *conscious awareness*. We are no longer willing to allow ourselves to remain ignorant of our previously unconscious creations. We are demanding that we become more aware, more enlightened and more visionary in relation to every one of our covert creative endeavors.

In truth, we have been creating together - unconsciously - since the beginning of our life on earth. The fact that we have been unaware of this phenomenon, however, has had the effect of our being unable to enjoy the creative process. In fact, had we been able to see and acknowledge what we were collectively doing, we surely could have enjoyed the effects of our joint creations more fully.

It has often been said that our collective humanity is in the adolescent stage of its development. It could equally be asserted that we are now on the doorstep of our adulthood. How often have we heard it said, "I never became fully aware of myself or of my life until I became an adult"? The same is true of our collective human "self." We are just beginning to wake up to one of the most ancient truths of our creation: that we are one.

Indeed, we are dedicating ourselves more and more powerfully to this awakening. In recent decades we have begun to use our sciences (for example, quantum physics) and technologies (for example, telecommunication) to facilitate our fuller grasp and experience of this phenomenon of oneness. Our consciousness is becoming educated, opened and awakened. Finally, we are beginning to see ourselves and our world in its fuller dimension and with new possibilities - through the eyes of oneness.

We no longer need to deny the fact of our underlying unity, or of our mutually interdependent functioning. As a human race, we are already well on the path of understanding our interactive and interdynamic oneness; we are now beginning to integrate that understanding into the depths of our collective consciousness. Now, as never before, we are actively establishing ourselves not only as independent beings inhabiting an earth together, but as interlinking and interconnected parts of a dynamic whole.

Imagine a future wherein your identity is as much that of the entire body as it is that of an individual cell. Indeed, a body's sense of life, reality and purpose is so much greater than what any of its cells could ever possess individually. What would our world be like if we all embraced our natural oneness - to the degree that our sense of identity shifted into that of our collective being? What would you be like if your personal identity merged into oneness with the whole as much as with the individual self you currently perceive yourself to be? This is exactly the direction toward which our collaborative human consciousness is moving us.

Our consciousness has decidedly placed its feet on the path of unifying our individual identities with those of other human beings and other life systems on our planet. Our human race is involving itself in a dynamic process of creating a fresh, open and expanded identity: that of a united family of human beings.

With a consciousness of oneness, we are capable of bringing about a reality far beyond that attainable through a consciousness of individuality. Through the eyes of oneness, we can create the external manifestations *of our own choosing*. From the perspective of oneness, we are free to reach into the rich warehouse of our mythical "field of dreams," and to invent a world of human accomplishments unimaginable a short time ago.

How does this growing phenomenon of oneness impact our purpose and role of being creators on earth? We are moving quickly toward a consciousness of our collective creativity, just as surely as we have already recognized the importance of our individual creativity. We are beginning to understand that our collective creative nature is at least as powerful and expressive as is our individual creative nature. For example, we are seeing that our collective creative will is expressed in every one of life's major events, just as intentionally as is each person's individual will.

You are indeed the creator of your own personal world, in and through all four arenas of your creative activity. In exactly the same way, our "United States of Consciousness" is an equally creative factor in the evolution of our common future.

We all are active and dedicated creators, both individually and collectively. In fact, our united consciousness is becoming more and more dedicated to our role of group creativity and to our power as a united race of human beings. Just as each of us deserves to be in charge of his or her personal world, so do we as a human family deserve to create ourselves and our world to our common liking. In fact, we have always had this right and power; we are simply becoming more aware of it now, and are taking charge of it in a more conscious and responsible manner.

Let's look anew at you as creator, both of your world and of ours. For the purpose of making your personal creative adventure more fulfilling, you have at your fingertips four sources of creative power, four dimensions of personal consciousness, four unique perspectives and worlds of inventive activity.

Yet, your identity is far beyond this personal perspective. You are also a living, dynamic and collaborative part of a bigger reality, a more global self, a more powerful identity. You are a vibrant part of the human creative force, a participant in our joint and collective consciousness, an essential part of a unified self. As such, your creative power, your personal energy and your unique way of expressing become a meaningful and intentional part of our collective creative power.

Far beyond the imaginary walls of your personal life, you are a co-creator of our collective world. As part of our global human adventure, you contribute your own perspective, orientation and "touch" to our combined creation of every aspect of our reality. You bring your spiritual, mythical, energized and reality-oriented consciousness into active interaction with our collective world of possibilities. You are an influencer of, contributor to, and involved participant in our integrated creation of human life on earth. By being yourself, you add to our choices, dreams and directions; you complete our values and orientations.

You are, therefore, not only a creator of your own life through your powerful fourfold dimension of personal activity. You are that same dynamic creative force, in and through that same dynamic fourfold consciousness, with and for the benefit of all of us. You hold the same privileges and powers as an influential and contributing member of this collective consciousness as do legislators in the Congress, citizens in a democracy, and governments in the United Nations. Without you and your unique co-creative role, our human condition would be different than what it now is.

How is it that you are the creator not only of yourself, but of our global and integrated "self?" How can you be such a valuable and essential contributor to our collective consciousness? Let's look first at the creative role of every one of us. In his and her own way, every person on this earth is a powerful, dynamic and important contributor to life's evolving patterns. Just as a jigsaw puzzle picture looks incomplete when even one piece is missing, so is each person on earth an essential piece of the overall picture of human life.

Further, every person's spirit, energy, myths and experiences influence the creative activity of every other human being -just as every cell in the human body affects the activity and life force of every other cell. Indeed, each of us is *that* powerful and influential. Through eyes of oneness, we see a bigger picture of the world in which we live. It's a world in which every human being plays an integral and complementary role in our global creative experience.

Every one of us influences those around us - and the world as a whole - far more than we usually know. Our role as global participants and contributors is only recently coming clearly into our view - through the visionary eyes of oneness.

Our human body's cells have their fullest and most ultimate meaning not in their individual job function, but in their contribution to the functioning of the whole body. Even though every cell is dedicated to fulfilling its individual responsibility, its most important contribution is in its collaborative co-creation of the health of the body as a whole. Simply stated, each cell facilitates the optimal functioning of the entire body simply by performing its individual role with integrity.

The same process applies to us as a body of individual human beings. Each of us functions both personally and in relation to the whole. We all are purposefully and powerfully interdependent and interrelational, no matter what the nature of our individual functioning. In fact, one of the main reasons that you have the specific personality, life purpose and energy you do is that, through this unique combination of personal attributes, you contribute to and complement the whole human family. By living creatively and fully with your personal characteristics, you fulfill not only your personal *raison d'etre*, but also do your part to fulfill the needs and purposes of us all.

Thus, your importance to us is notable. We would not be as integrated or complete without your being the person you are, playing the roles you play, and thinking the way you think.

Let's look as a modern-day example - that of peace on earth. In our collective consciousness, our human family is increasingly embracing the myth (or belief) of the "millennium," the thousand years of peace cited in the Christian scriptures and predicted by many prophets and seers over the ages. In our integrated group consciousness, we are paving the way for the advent of this myth into reality, by creating a growing desire and demand for peace in the depths of our collective consciousness. Gradually, we are becoming more united and committed in this collective demand for peace. Already, the effects are becoming evident: more and more external manifestations of peace are occurring in regional, intercultural and international peace arenas.

You are an active, involved part of this creation - not only because you happen to be alive at this time of our growing quest for peace, but more especially, because you participate dynamically in our unified human goals. Simply by being yourself, you are actively involved in creating every important facet of our human destiny.

That's right, our human destiny. This destiny is not only our dream or ideal; it is even more importantly our creation, our reality, our doing. We are the planners and the implementers of our present and future world. All of us, joined in a united consciousness, write the script and stage the production of life's events. Every human being alive participates as a significant actor on our collaborative stage of life. We share one reality: we are all collaborators in our future. Each of us plays a unique role, but we all create our shared destiny together. All of us, together - in the limitless depths and creative heights of our collective consciousness.

Today, we are creating our world together. The earth environment is both our supportive means to a fulfilling life and our platform for creating ourselves as intentional, purposeful and fulfilled beings. We are embracing ourselves as a human family, a collective body, a united consciousness.

Through our collective consciousness, we have created the various conflicts and wars evident in our history, yet we have equally pursued our common vision and destiny of a world of creativity and fulfillment. Through our visionary consciousness, we have more recently joined together - albeit mostly unconsciously and covertly - to continue our pursuit of a world characterized by cooperation, mutual respect, and global fulfillment. Such a path has long been our collective intention and dedication, even though we have often historically given more visible expression to less unified, more self-centered expressions of consciousness. Through this gradual, step-by-step approach to forging our destiny, nonetheless, we have kept our vision and desires clear. We want peace for our human family.

In our current age, we have become more committed than ever before to create the millennium, and to make peace a true reality. It is our collective consciousness that is our most powerful tool for this creation. You and I together, through our unified and blended consciousness, are uniting our wills into this singular call for peace on earth.

Because of the power of our oneness, our call surely shall be answered. Our collective consciousness, once its power is *consciously owned* by us, will be our primary vehicle for the expression of our united vision into the reality of peace. Together, we are one; together, we are powerful; together, we can and will create our destiny.

CHAPTER 11

A NEW WORLD

A new world is in our sights. It is a world of our unique making, designed from our collective consciousness and embodied with our special brand of vision. Indeed, we are creating this world at this very moment. We shall continue its unfoldment as the ensuing days and years pass, with each event serving as a dramatic expression of our personal and collective world-making.

Your personal world takes its external form from the interaction of your individual consciousness, dreams and will. Our collective world, similarly, expresses the desires and will of every human being; it gives form to our common dreams and visions. In this chapter, I invite us to become more conscious and dedicated in the creation of this world - yours personally and ours collectively.

What type and quality of world do you want? Most people have a general, and sometimes specific, idea of the kind of person they want to be and the life circumstances in which they want to live. Yet, most of us do not feel totally in charge of bringing those ideas into the realm of everyday reality.

Rather, we often allow other thoughts - such as a "need" for security or approval - to keep us from fulfilling our more inspired dreams. Collectively, we have institutionalized these thoughts into psychological symptoms and syndromes - such as fear, depression and stress. Then, to help us deal with these symptoms and overcome these "blocks" to our fulfillment, we have created medical and psychological experts and systems.

Could it be that these systems and procedures for alleviating our pain are simply another ritual - a self-perpetuating one - that removes us yet another step from our innate creative nature? We put so much effort into removing our blocks, resolving our fears, and overcoming our conflicts that we have little energy left for living life as it was meant to be lived - with a free and creative spirit. Aren't many of us wasting precious time pursuing psychological healthiness through these varied systems of therapy, only to discover that a more powerful key to successful living is to embrace our natural creative expression? It seems to me that our cherished fears and demons are often nothing more than our official and sanctioned excuses for stifling our natural creative instincts.

Despite these systems and the consciousness that underlies them, we are now beginning to create a world in which we can embrace and express our common creative nature. We are developing a mentality wherein we support each person's and culture's indigenous creative expressions. We are collectively co-creating a world in which global peace and each person's fulfillment are becoming the norm.

Isn't it time, then, to move beyond preoccupation with self-focused issues such as fear, conflict and pain? Isn't it time to move our consciousness toward our growing collective dance of creative expression? We are quickly entering an age wherein those who remain distracted with self-involved issues will be less prepared to enjoy the fruits of our collective harvest. Rather, they will remain involved in the ongoing rituals of their personal processes, ever convinced of the value of their psychological journey, but unable to understand why personal fulfillment continues to elude them.

I believe that the main reason for our personal unhappiness in life is that most of us feel separated and disconnected, both from our inner source and our interpersonal oneness. There is an approach more powerful than processing this dilemma into overtime, and more effective than the exhausting rituals that often reinforce self-preoccupation.

It is this: stop processing, and live. Open to the bigger picture of life, both personally and collectively. Become expressively creative. Take charge. Be the full person that you are, **and** dare to express that person in every aspect of your life. Yes, it may take time, experimentation and determination; but I can guarantee this approach will be at least as effective as, and certainly more enjoyable than, the above processes.

Life's purpose is to live, to express, to evolve. We live on earth in order to bathe in life's creative energies, and to express those energies in our every thought and activity. Put simply, we're here to create, then to enjoy the products of that creation. All other issues, conflicts or processes are simply a decoying maneuver and a time-out from life's real meaning.

The nature of these maneuvers depends primarily on our consciousness. For example, if we love ourselves and feel that we deserve happiness, we will create projects and processes that are more self-fulfilling. If we do not love ourselves, or if we believe that we deserve unhappiness, then our projects will undoubtedly involve pain or sorrow. Simply put, it's up to us. Our happiness depends on and stems from our underlying consciousness.

What world do you want to create for yourself? Actually, that desired world is already alive and waiting within your consciousness. Deep in your personal knowing, the blueprint and design for that world is already formed, as is your method for reproducing it into your conscious awareness. The movements of your life are inspired in and stem from this deepest (or, if you prefer, highest) component of your being. We need only become aware of this dynamic and individualized design, then bring it into our conscious life in a way that bears the unique mark of "us."

Your personal world is yours to create and to bring into active realization. The domain of your personal life belongs to nobody except you. You are the creator and artist of the unique set of myths, energies, and realities called "you." Nothing can take away this creative right and drive, no matter what events or circumstances might characterize your life. You alone have the power to dictate the directions and patterns of your life.

To whatever degree you choose, every moment is yours - yours to live, to embrace, to celebrate. The magic of being you is that you have powerful rights of creation in and for your life. In this regard, it is up to you to fashion a person and a life that reflect the ideal or vision that you have for yourself. This life is your creative ministry (spiritual perspective), your field of dreams (mythical perspective), your personal space (energy perspective), and your unique expression (reality perspective). In every one of these arenas of creative activity, you - and you alone - are in charge.

What is your personal world? From the heights of your innermost spiritual consciousness, what are the unique purposes and directions of your life? In your mythical realm of limitless possibilities, what values and dreams capture your attention? In the dynamic movement of your energy system, how are you moving yourself to create your world? How do you motivate yourself to create the realities of your life - your decisions, your relationships, your achievements?

Your world - and it's yours, remember - can have every fulfillment and accent you desire it to have ... *if you* are willing to embrace yourself as its full creator ... if you stop blaming anyone or anything else for whatever is not to your liking ... *if you* are willing to become powerfully one with *every* aspect of your personal self ... *if you* are dedicated to using the four worlds of your personal experience as a powerful and creative force.

These "ifs" are not impossible. On the contrary, they're easy. Easy, because it is our very created nature to fulfill them. It is our natural style to be in touch with every inspiration, every thought, every movement and every creative decision of our being. We are born with this innate capacity to know and experience ourselves fully.

Despite our current collective belief that our awareness is split between "conscious" (that which we can know) and "unconscious" (that which is outside our ability to know) dimensions, no such limitation exists in our pure state. We are limited in our capacity for self awareness and fulfillment only to the degree that we personally or collectively believe that such a limitation is our destiny. Such a belief has no real basis.

We're capable of being totally aware of our four worlds of creative life. In the spiritual, mythical, energy and real-life aspects of our make-up, we all can know ourselves fully. When we arrive at this fuller awareness of our fourfold life, we become more complete and fulfilled human beings. Better yet, we are in a position to experience the interconnection and unity of these four worlds. Then, once personally integrated, we are ready to move our consciousness beyond ourselves to embrace the bigger world around us.

Our external world is often the creation of our collective will at its deeper, more "unconscious" level of activity. Despite our earnest efforts to take charge of our life circumstances, most of us leave the bulk of our creative decision-making to the inner beliefs (myth) and movements (energy) of our consciousness, of which we typically have little awareness. We consciously labor over the many facets involved in decision-making, only to allow our more unconscious processes to make the final decision anyway. Not that this is necessarily a negative phenomenon; indeed, it is sometimes helpful in that it allows a deeper, clearer knowing or wisdom, to be more actively involved in the final decision.

In the world of current events, for example, we have collectively allowed a more unconscious and powerful force to bring us beyond the Cold War and into our present period of increasing cooperation, openness and mutual support. In this instance, our conscious efforts to reduce strategic and nuclear weaponry were far overshadowed by the deeper decision of our collective consciousness to create a far more cooperative relationship between superpower nations. Our deeper "wisdom" moved us, more than ever before, to an unconscious decision to create a more hope-filled basis for a new world order. Our global inner vision became a dynamic factor in our collective decision-making, while most of us were totally unaware that such a mighty force was covertly at work.

A new world. What will we have it be? Certainly, it will bear the unique mark of us all. It will have our deep desires moving it and our will ingrained within it. Our world of tomorrow can be whatever we choose it to be, whatever our collective mind set determines it to be. It will express our consciousness in ways that may surprise us.

We all will be different. Our consciousness will no longer tolerate separation-oriented attitudes (note our recent shifts in attitudes about slavery, civil rights and sexual discrimination) or behaviors (as evidenced in our stronger laws in relation to segregation and sexual harassment). We shall continue to expand our vision, our myths and our consciousness, so that our behaviors and interactions can become more meaningful.

We will indeed create a world other than the present one in which we live. The question is: what will it look like? What will be its attitudes, orientations and attributes?

The following is a ten-fold response to this question. Again, it stems from my own vision. It is a picture of our developing world as I see it. It presents a glimpse of our future as it is uniquely framed by our collective consciousness. It reflects my personal belief about how we will use our group consciousness as we weave the web of our future. This vision combines our spiritual, mythical, energy-oriented and reality-based qualities into an integrated and powerful force, capable of producing a new and adventuresome world. It bespeaks my experience of humanity as inventive, ingenious and inspired. What do I see?

(1) I first envision all of us more fully *realizing our power*, both as individuals and as a human race. We shall increase our awareness of our personal and collective power to create our own destiny. We shall embrace our right to take charge of our lives and to decide our future. We shall rediscover our heritage as meaningful creators of our human world.

(2) Second, I see us evolving even deeper *feelings for ourselves as worthwhile* persons and as a deserving human family. We shall, simply put, love ourselves more strongly and sensitively. Love, respect and honor for the natural deservingness of our created "personhood" shall become more ingrained in our collective psyche.

(3) Stemming from this heightened sensitivity, every one of us will integrate the many facets of his and her own consciousness. Each of us will begin to blend the inner worlds of spirit, myth, energy, and reality into a unified whole, into a *united consciousness*. This integrative process will allow us to experience ourselves in our natural and unified state. As a result, we will re-open our vision to the wondrous nature of this planet and of our own species. Unity of worlds - internally for each one of us and externally for all of us - is our special key for rediscovering our heritage, our path and our human destiny.

(4) Fourth, we shall ingrain into our consciousness an ever-growing *vision of ourselves as a human family*. We shall shift our consciousness from its present emphasis on our individuality to a focus on our collective body and unity. Such a graphic shift can only result in a world where our entire body of humankind is more cared for and mutually supported. Rather than life being a struggle between individual cells of the body - whether for influence, control or power - we shall become a united body of consciousness, a true family of persons, a committed interaction of brothers and sisters. Oneness as a human family is our most dynamic key to creating a world that is powerfully inspired, freely expressed, and lovingly supported.

The above four scenarios serve as a basis and foundation for our exciting world of the future. With these four phenomena solidly established in our personal and collective consciousness, we will easily begin to forge a meaningful plan and design for living. I have no doubt that even the least "evolved" of us will be moved by the power of our growing consciousness. Thus, my vision continues.

(5) Deep within each one of us is a *knowing*. From our most ancient memories and our innermost wisdom, every human being alive has an inner knowledge. This knowledge, whether subtle or overt, informs us about our inherent beauty; it tells us that we are "created in the image and likeness of God." From the depths of our personal and collective awareness, we *know* - not think, not theorize, not hypothesize - how steeped in splendor and wonder we are in our human nature.

More specifically, we know that we are created as an expression of love, and that there is some "higher" purpose in our existence. Further, we have a deep sense of our underlying oneness, both as a human family and in our individual make-up. We know that we are strongly oriented toward loving and being loved. Also, we are aware that our human nature is one of creative participation in the evolving patterns of life. Lastly, we know that our human spirit is ever seeking ways to celebrate life and to fulfill our destiny.

These inner knowings connect us to our deepest and purest wisdom about our human nature and path on earth. Based on this wisdom, we are internally prepared to create a world - both personally and collectively - that reflects our beauty and splendor.

These deeper knowings are now moving more predominately into the more conscious levels of our awareness. As a human race, we are beginning to accept this underlying wisdom into our evolving system of beliefs about ourselves. I see this knowledge becoming a more active ingredient in our creative endeavors, and a powerful influence in the evolution of our destiny. Our creations of our future will reflect and express this knowing, as we continue to embrace this deep wisdom in our conscious processes.

(6) Based on this awareness of our shared worth, we shall *create a world committed to peace*. I firmly believe that real peace will be an actual creation on this planet before too many more years. We are more and more willing peace as an active ingredient in our relationships, in our families, and in our international affairs. Already, this collective will is becoming a demand that resounds from the depths of our unified being; it is a command that all wars stop, and that peace reside as a powerful force in our world.

Peace is becoming more a part of our commitment every day. In every intercultural and international dialogue, we simply expect peace. This expectation is already becoming reality, as peace becomes more and more an active part of our human fabric.

Peace will serve not only as a sign of our deservingness, but also as a powerful platform on which we can build more meaningful interactions. Peace as a means, not just its own end - a means of bringing about new structures and systems for the betterment of human conditions, so that ultimately every human being can enjoy the promised fruits of this earth.

Peace is, I believe, the symbolic means we have already collectively chosen to bring about a world steeped in a more sensitive commitment to one another's fulfillment. We are looking to the arrival of international peace as the real turning point in the way we live human life. When we actually achieve this peace, we will allow ourselves to establish the "new world order" that we have longed for - a world order characterized by refreshing ways of fulfilling every person's basic needs.

When we create peace among ourselves - and, better yet, institutionalize it as a means to our collective fulfillment - we shall be able to transfer our creative energies from a focus on self-defense to one of committed remediation of the effects of our warlike past. Further, we shall be free to learn new ways to care for each other and guarantee our basic human rights. Beyond that, we shall finally be in a position to allow our natural state of creativity help us to celebrate life more consistently.

Indeed, this is a noble scenario I have just painted. The most promising part of it is this: we already have begun the process of peace; in fact, we already are well along the path toward its accomplishment. Every other age - for example, the Age of Enlightenment - has had its own noble ideals, dreams and objectives. In each of those ages, these dreams attained only a limited reality. Indeed, they were accomplished only to the degree that the consciousness of the people allowed - the self-fulfilling prophesy in action again!

In our present age, we have spent many years, even decades, building a foundation for this dramatic leap of faith - faith in ourselves as a beautiful creation, and faith in our right to fulfill our destiny as a united family. Yes, we are about to take the kind of leap no other age has been ready to commit to: a leap into a determined *creation* of peace, into honoring each person's dignity, and into celebrating life. We're committed to creating our earth, our consciousness and our relationships as never before, and - best of all - to enjoying the effects of these creations as never before.

Whether or not we fully achieve these lofty objectives is a moot question. Perhaps it matters greatly, perhaps not at all. If not, it could be that the leap itself will have been our main purpose and its own reward. If so, then we can indeed live out our destiny and enjoy the many other possibilities that lie buried deep in our collective psyche. Nonetheless, it is our present privilege to do exactly what we have begun to do: going about the process of creating a new world. It is our right to determine the nature of the creations we pursue; and that is exactly our commitment for the coming age.

(7) Next, I see a world wherein, regardless of the outcome of our creative attempts, we begin to appreciate ourselves as persons. We shall develop a *new sensitivity* for and commitment to each other as deserving human beings.

The word "sensitivity" brings up images of warmth, feeling and responsiveness. Our human world is hungry for personal love and caring. We want to fulfill our basic need to connect meaningfully to each other. We are now ready to involve sensitivity in our daily interactions with one another.

We already are committing ourselves to this sensitivity - interpersonally, in our communities, within nations, and internationally. For example, our world today is demanding the end of Apartheid, simply because we more actively care about the rights of every person, race and culture. In addition, our global family is more vocally calling for peace, primarily because of our growing sensitivity to each person's right to live without conflict.

Sensitivity is ingrained deep within our human consciousness; it is a powerful ingredient in our personal and collective psyche. Sensitivity for ourselves and our world is a potentially mighty force in every one of us; indeed, we are now using this force as a central ingredient in our creation of a new world.

(8) From the depths of our caring, we are moving toward a world filled with a deepening respect for every human being. With sensitivity playing a greater role in our values, we shall increasingly appreciate each person as a special, unique and valuable member of our family. This respect will motivate us more and more to *heal the pains* and unhealthy conditions of many of our society's less fortunate members. Better still, because of our appreciation of each person's value, we shall gradually change the make-up and fabric of our human condition.

Specifically, this means that we shall bring about a different kind of human race. Our collective consciousness will no longer need as many "bad guys" to fulfill the good vs. evil myth. Rather, we shall bond together in a collective project of building a world of harmony and fulfillment for every human being.

So often, we human beings have learned our lessons and achieved our growth by creating pain (conflict, injustice, wars, etc.); we call it "learning the hard way." Because we have historically separated ourselves from the fuller vision of oneness, we learned to ignore our more subtle, love-filled cues for painless learning and growth. Thus, our deeper and loving consciousness has had no other option except to get our attention "the hard way," that is, by bringing on a painful event, circumstance or behavior. The self-perpetuating presence of so many villains and selfish members of our race is, at least in part, due to this historical orientation toward tough love.

We are not doomed to this fate, however. As we become more united with our total self, we automatically begin to pay closer attention to our love-based cues. As our human family learns to expand its sensitivity and respect, our collective consciousness will no longer require the presence or activity of as many negative or evil persons; they will slowly disappear.

Thus, we are on the verge of re-creating ourselves as a human body. When a person begins taking better care of any part of his or her physical body, the entire body responds, and every cell becomes healthier. So also with our unified human body. As we begin to create ourselves into a more respectful and sensitive society, and as we take care of our more needy members, every member becomes healthier. Such a society is within our view. Indeed, it is in our hands.

(9) This new world will be motivated by a powerful *consciousness of responsibility*. Not the kind of responsibility characterized by guilt or a desire to please. Rather, a responsibility motivated by a genuine dedication to ourselves and our planet.

Our planet, for example, is both our host and our servant; we are here both as her guests and her prized offspring. The balance between this twofold role is one we call responsibility. When we are motivated by a sensitivity to her beauty and a desire to honor her innate splendor, we have no alternative but to take more responsible action in her regard.

This orientation to responsibility will result not simply in our cleaning up the earth's environment (that is, remediating our past excesses), but also in our becoming partners in our planet's natural ways of creating.

There is a natural wisdom here on earth, a special and particular way in which creative ventures are conducted. I don't see this natural style as a set of laws or principles, as some people do. Rather, I see earth's ways as simply a map or model of what works, and an invitation to us to apply these practices to our own creative ventures. This perception allows us to become one with a natural rhythm of life rather than see ourselves as invited to conform to rules not of our making. This cooperative oneness with our planetary methodology is part and parcel of our creative ingenuity.

I envision our future world as one in which we shall become responsible partners in this more natural wisdom. We shall learn from earth's natural ways, for example, how to heat our homes, run our factories, and transact our business. We shall become creators of life according to the design modeled by earth in nature's innately responsible processes. Such a partnership with earth will involve innovative discoveries, as we uncover new ways of being "earth-friendly" users of our planet's natural resources. Such co-creative oneness with the energies and wisdom of our earthly home will bring us into renewed ownership of our responsibility here.

Responsibility in taking charge of ourselves and our world as we participate in earth's natural creative cycles - this is our destiny. When we can move through the various cycles and rhythms of our life, just as nature does in its four seasons - without feeling upset when it's winter or over eager when it's summer; seeing the bigger picture when fall takes away our seeming security; and still maintaining our balance when spring's hopes and promises are limited by summer's droughts - then we have begun to learn earth's ways. At that point, we are ready to exercise responsibility without needing to "learn the hard way."

(10) Last, I envision a world wherein we *return to our original state of oneness*, and to the wholeness that is our nature. We are attempting to complete an enormous and awesome task - that of fulfilling our individuality through the power of our unity. Our sense of oneness will constitute a major fabric of the world we create; it will allow us to see beyond self-preoccupation to the needs of every person. It will inspire us to expand our caring and vision to include tangible commitments to our human family as a whole.

Will we complete this task? I truly believe that we have every capability to do so, and that we are well on our way to its unfoldment. Most importantly, we are becoming more and more committed to achieving this goal; we are embracing it as our destiny.

It takes a true dreamer and visionary to perceive oneness as our destiny. Yet, it may be these very visionaries who will lead us to its accomplishment. We are on the threshold of bringing ourselves full-tilt toward the realization of this dream of oneness. Whether we actually achieve this noble goal or not, our active and dedicated participation in the process may be its own fulfillment, and cannot help but inspire us to increased responsiveness to each other. More and more of us are choosing to pursue the goal of oneness, simply because we believe it to be our destiny and fulfillment as a human race. For no other reason - the power of our sense of destiny - we shall succeed.

A new world is indeed ahead of us. Best of all, it is a world of our own creation and one that expresses our desires and will. This world's future nature rests in the wise hands of our collective consciousness at this point. More and more, as we continue to bring this design for our future into visible expression, and as we produce a world filled with the ingredients of our making, we become conscious collaborators and creators.

At that point, we shall invent a new world order, not just because we shall have changed our thinking, but because we shall have exercised our right to take charge of our creative purpose. We are indeed the creators - or co-creators, if you will - of a special and wondrous world, wrought according to our design and reinvented daily according to our ongoing inspiration.

This world is being created dynamically, even as you read these words. At this time in our evolutionary history, we are engaged in a purposeful and powerful commitment to build this world, *without turning back*. We are dedicating ourselves to our future with a collective determination never before experienced in our history. It is our challenge to continue in this dedicated vision; it is our honor to participate in its creation; and it is our destiny to move forward in this fulfilling creative venture.

CHAPTER 12

IT'S UP To Us!

A new world lies ahead of us. We are its creators. We are in charge of its unfoldment. This profound truth speaks to us for a single purpose: so that each of us can determine his or her own role in its creation. Some of us will choose to participate actively in our future's creation by becoming leaders in its development. Others will leave this leadership function to others, while they themselves attend more exclusively to the tasks of their own lives. Many of us, however, place our feet somewhere between these two extremes.

One person's role is not necessarily any more important or productive than that of another person. Rather, each of us is an active and meaningful participant in our co-creative human journey *in his and her own way*.

There is no right or wrong way to bring about our future. Each person is a creative, involved and purposeful member of our human family, whether or not he or she is consciously aware of this fact. Likewise, each of us makes a meaningful contribution to our future, regardless of the particular role he or she plays. We will create a world far beyond the limitations of our present one. How we do it is up to us, both as individuals and as a human race. To insinuate that there is a right way to bring about this creation is to undermine the power and value of our creative will. To implicate those who sit back and "take" while praising those who "give" is to ignore the underlying fact that we all are vital parts of this creative process, regardless of our individual roles.

To use guilt or fear to motivate people to become involved in "making this world a better place to live" is manipulative and demeaning to our innate worth as human beings. In truth, we don't need to be cajoled into creating our future. A world created out of guilt, fear or forced responsibility will not last; it will quickly give way to the shallowness that motivated its establishment.

Thus, for us to go about "educating" people as to the right way to behave or think is valid and effective only when pursued in the spirit of sharing our own vision. To do so with an underlying motive of convincing, cajoling or manipulating, however, is quickly sensed by those being "educated" and is treated accordingly. Those who must impose their beliefs on others - whether directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly - plainly do not believe in the underlying beauty of our human race, nor do they respect the right of each person to take charge of his or her own life.

Isn't it often better to allow people to remain ignorant than to force our views on them? In the larger picture, such force eventually comes back to haunt its imposer, frequently in the form of active or passive rebellion. Isn't it usually more effective - as well as loving - simply to share what we know with others, then to allow them to make a totally free decision about it, with no implied pressure or feeling of obligation?

In such an open-minded approach, we honor and value the human being, and in the process we build a powerful foundation for future ways of relating. Those who feel that they must use force in a genuine desire to instill peace in our world have missed an important point: one must first remove the splinter from his or her own eye.

The most effective way to bring about anything in life is to be absolutely sure that we have first achieved its creation within our own consciousness. With it solidly alive internally, its external expression will be by far simpler, more effective and more enjoyable.

In this present age, we are building a world of increasing mutual respect and cooperation. To attempt to construct such a world with tactics opposite to these values is both short-sighted and self-defeating. Such an approach has the same wisdom as did the former Communist regimes in imposing the "enlightened" principles of Marxism on millions of people without giving them the right to choose that way of life. Though it took 75 years to accomplish, this approach of force resulted in the clear demise of both the regime and the philosophy.

You are responsible for making your own choices about your role and purpose in life. Are you here to take your place as a leader in this new world? Or, is your role one of being supportive of the efforts of others? Are you alive primarily to take charge of your own life, leaving the needs of society to the efforts of others? What, really, is your decision about how you will use your unique talents and skills?

I believe that you will choose your role and your future based on your personal inspiration and life purpose. I also know that, in so doing, you will be making a strong contribution to our global creation.

Let's proceed to the spirit of this chapter: it's up to us. We are a human family at a crossroads. Our future is now being written by us, both individually and together. *We are confronting perhaps the most challenging of opportunities: the task of creating an entire earth filled with the ingredients of our very own choosing.*

Our psychologies have now evolved sufficiently for us to realize that we indeed create our own reality. Our philosophies have generally arrived at a consensus that our reality is what we make of it. Our sciences are dramatically pointing the way to a new world of human possibilities. Our spiritualities are becoming an even stronger voice, one that emphasizes the basic fact of our oneness. Every formal expression of our collective consciousness is teaching us that we are alive to co-create a world in which *our destiny is in our own hands.*

Earth is a planet that is ever permissive to her life forms, especially to the human species. As human beings, we are endowed with that extra ingredient called free will, which places our choices and our creations in our own hands. This does not imply that God has abandoned us or is unavailable to our processes of evolution. Rather, it means that divine involvement usually respects, and does not interfere with, our human decisions to determine our lives.

It seems to me that God is in no way less involved in our creative living. Rather, that divine force usually chooses to act through - rather than upon - our personal and collective power to make choices. That is, "the kingdom of heaven is within" more than it is manifested "without." No religious person would disagree that God has planned this life both for the exercise of free will and for our complete happiness. Yet, this divine plan is usually lived out and expressed through our personal choices and creations more than through divine intervention. *It's up to us.*

Everything written in this book integrates the teachings of modern science, philosophy, psychology, religion and spirituality. While some of the descriptive terms may differ - and while each person will experience and interpret each conclusion in his or her own way - these differences are not substantial; they are differences only of external form. In our era of integrative consciousness, every orientation and approach in our human culture is coming into its intended harmony, so that *oneness* can again become a powerful force in bringing about human destiny.

I actively invite you to individualize these ideas in whatever way is meaningful in your life. It doesn't matter if your conclusions or orientations take an entirely different form than what I have given here. In fact, I hope every one who is reading this book will apply these thoughts in exactly that way. Personally, I see how important, even essential, it is for each of us to personalize his and her own beliefs, values and consciousness.

Such a personal process ensures that our individual puzzle has each of its pieces clear, strong and whole. Without our individuality firm and solid, our whole human family cannot take strong form. Thus, the personalized consciousness of each of us - beliefs, values or myths - is of immense value to the rest of us. Stated succinctly, we need you to be who you are, believe as you do, and act as you do. In this book, I have frequently emphasized that each of us is in charge of his and her own reality, and contributes meaningfully to our collective creative efforts. It is our privilege and right as human beings to take personal charge of every moment of our lives. Most of our modern societies have overemphasized the importance of each citizen's conforming to the good of the many. In so doing, we have often neglected society's responsibility to support the rights of the individual.

Perhaps it's time for us to recognize that each person's greatest contribution to the many is often through a strong commitment to fulfill his or her own person and life. When we realize the intimate connection between individual fulfillment and the good of the whole, then all of us will begin to feel like an important part of our group destiny. Then, we can fashion a world in which we all support and enjoy each other.

Each of us is in charge of creating tomorrow's world - not primarily by dreaming about what we want it to be - but by actively and responsibly creating it in our lives every day. The most powerful key to tomorrow's success is today's creative endeavors. In our every act of present creation lies the foundation for tomorrow's expressive opportunities. Have you noticed that we usually bring into our conscious awareness only what is important for today, leaving tomorrow's business to the future? Tomorrow will usually take care of itself when we attend to today's tasks. Our world of the future is mostly created in our efforts of the present.

It's up to us. All of us. Now. Each of us, in his or her own way, has the capacity to create our united world of tomorrow. Together, we constitute the dynamic force that shall forge our future and our destiny.

This is both an awesome task and a great privilege: to create a world in the image and likeness of ourselves. To contribute to the destiny of the entire body of humankind. To allow our deepest spirit of love and oneness to pour forth into meaningful expression. To evolve ourselves into a race of persons with directions and opportunities never before possible. To live happily ever after - not by sitting back and waiting for a magic prince to rescue us - but by taking charge of our creative nature, by owning the power of our vision, and by taking responsibility for our future.

To take such a responsible approach is inspired from the depths of our collective will, wherein we are increasingly dedicated to fulfilling our ideal destiny. In this dedication, oneness is becoming more of a driving force for all of us at this time, and is formulating a powerful message to us. The message invites us to take charge - in whatever way each of us is inspired to do it - and create, create, create. Not with feelings of guilt, pressure or obligation - but with joy, dedication and power.

Our four worlds of human functioning are beginning to come together into their more natural and unified whole. Our orientations of spirit, myth, energy, and reality are integrating into a more united consciousness. More than at any other time in our recorded history, we now have the opportunity to bring these worlds of experience into their natural harmony and balance. At last, each of us can begin to function as an integrated and whole person rather than as a sum of separate parts.

We are now ready to coordinate, blend, harmonize and unify these four styles of living the human journey. Even more importantly, we can now allow this integration to serve as our primary tool for rediscovering our heritage, for redefining our purpose, and for reconstructing our destiny. This process of bringing four worlds of consciousness into one is parallel to the United States combining thirteen colonies into a single country, and Switzerland uniting four cultures and languages into a unified nation. While each of our four worlds of experience will retain its individual functioning, it will do so more and more in synchronicity with our "United States of Consciousness."

The bigger meaning of our oneness is this: we have so much more power available for our use when we are integrated than when our consciousness is split. "Divide and conquer" has been a strategy for winning wars and conflicts for centuries. "In unity there is strength" is a newer discovery and a vital force for living life more powerfully. United, we are capable of any achievement; divided, we must expend enormous amounts of energy and time resolving inner and outer conflicts before we feel ready to act.

In uniting our inner worlds into one, we rediscover the joy and spontaneity of our inner spirit, the fuller wisdom of our beliefs, and the natural flow of our energies. Integrating our consciousness opens our insight and vision to the higher purposes of our lives and to the fuller power of our every creative act. When we are one, we automatically cease finding fault with ourselves, and we discover the bigger wisdom behind our every decision. Ultimately, we begin to re-conceptualize life, and we expand our capacity to take charge of its evolution.

We are one - by nature and by design. I do not believe that we were ever intended to separate our consciousness into vying factions or separate compartments. In fact, we no longer need to accept this sub-divided consciousness. Rather, we are now ready to reconnect with the unity that is our created nature, our intended path, our prescribed destiny. Actually, as a human family, we have spent years, even decades, preparing ourselves for this leap back into our natural state of oneness. We have endured world wars, struggles for equality, and a host of other issues in our preparation for becoming one. We are now at a point where the preparation is complete enough; we are inviting ourselves to take the plunge. Will we?

Today, we have become aware of our power to bring about whatever we choose simply by invoking the dynamic power of consciousness. For example, in the recent Persian Gulf War, allied victory was achieved quickly because so many countries and peoples of the world were unified in their commitment to return Kuwait to its own rule. Likewise, the former Soviet Communist regime crumbled fairly quickly because of a united determination that those people's rights would be restored to their own control. Similarly, certain leaders, such as Mohandas Ghandi, have demonstrated immense power to bring about significant change, simply because they have personally achieved a consciousness of oneness.

Oneness is a mighty power. Oneness knows no obstacles and has no enemies; it sees only truth. With a consciousness of oneness we can join our forces, see beyond the illusionary barriers of individual differences, and achieve untold accomplishments. Oneness allows us a deep inner knowing that surpasses the limits of learned knowledge. A consciousness of oneness allows us to enjoy our life experiences, rather than feel overwhelmed by their many facets. Most important, oneness constitutes a power that enables us to take confident charge of every aspect of human living.

Oneness is our right, our destiny. From a religious perspective, spiritual visionaries have long claimed that a heaven on earth is on its way; they have often asserted that God will not leave His people to languish in pain here. From a psychological perspective, we have used the themes of self-awareness and personal growth to lead ourselves to a readiness for a free and unified consciousness. Scientifically, the findings of modern physics have opened our minds to a consciousness of an integrated reality. Every field of human study now points the way to this new and powerful consciousness; to a new world of thought and freedom; to our destiny as a renewed family of purposeful human beings.

This is our time to embrace this power of oneness. We now have the opportunity to take a more active part in the dynamic process of unifying our consciousness. All of us are ready to take increased responsibility for our personal world, and for our collective world. As human beings, we have enormous talents and expertise for this task; simply by searching our inner resources do we find these gifts. Oneness is in our grasp, in a way that is unparalleled in our history.

Why not commit to the inherent oneness of our human nature? Oneness is where we started as a human family, and it's where we shall end our human journey. The challenge of re-creating it in our consciousness fulfills our co-creative purpose on earth. The task of dedicating ourselves to this co-creative role is our key to fulfilling our destiny of oneness.

Perhaps in the future, we shall compassionately recall the centuries when we tried to create peace through a consciousness of diversity and opposition. Perhaps we shall designate the ending period of that history as the Transformation Era, wherein we actively re-committed ourselves to the experience of oneness. At that future time - when we have fully integrated oneness into our creative endeavors - perhaps we shall experience life as it was designed to be lived: as an experience of harmony and mutual fulfillment.

Our future will be written differently simply because the consciousness of oneness allows such expansive and innovative expressions of our deeper selves. A commitment to oneness can unleash into our external world those myths previously allowed activity only in our dreams and fantasies. At that point, we all shall rejoice at the beauty of our human nature and enjoy the innate wonder of life on earth. We shall have returned to our most natural human condition: that of experiencing the fulfilling state of oneness.

Could it be that it was never meant for us to be separated from this state of oneness and to feel so divided, both internally and interpersonally? Whatever the reason for our historical preoccupation with separation, the most important fact is that we have learned from the experience.

Without condemnation for or guilt about our past, we are decidedly returning to our creative nature and to a unified way of experiencing life on our planet. We are on a course of growing dedication to a most powerful goal - oneness.

It's time for us to bring this movement toward oneness from the unconscious into the more meaningful conscious realms of our awareness. We are now free to discontinue our historical pattern of relegating so much of our experience to the unconscious levels of functioning. To create our lives from an unconscious locus of control - whether individually or collectively - is not nearly as satisfying or effective as when we bring our conscious awareness into this creative process.

Reuniting reality and myth, spirit and energy, right- brain and left-brain, heart and mind - this is our key to innovative, powerful and dynamic creativity. One cell in a body is ill-equipped to impact a global physical reality unless bonded in unity with all the body's other cells. Together, in harmony and a spirit of oneness, anything can be accomplished.

When we assert that "it's up to us," it's important to remind ourselves that we are innately creative beings, no matter what. We have no choice but to create in everything we do. Our every activity and interaction are naturally creative; our every thought and feeling are creative by nature.

Yet, the bigger truth in this assertion is that *we have a choice*. The persistent choice that is ever before us is this: are we willing to be aware of our choices, even to participate consciously in their expression? We have the choice to be conscious as well as unconscious creators of life. Indeed, each of us is involved every day in both categories of creative endeavor.

To create consciously and with awareness of what we are doing is a very different experience than simply to allow our unconscious dynamics to express externally, without our conscious involvement. To become fully aware of our meaningful myths and purposeful energies, our spiritual source and personality traits, our significant dreams and innermost drives - this is a daring and powerful leap of faith into what being human is all about. To do so expresses our belief that every facet of our person is indeed created perfect, that we are truly special and intentional creations, and that we are capable of being totally in charge of our destiny. To leap into the totality of who we are, trusting that every aspect of our consciousness is purposeful and powerful, allows us to participate dynamically in the fulfillment of our lives.

To remain unaware of our deeper dynamics, or to ignore the meaningful aspects of our unified functioning, is simply to condemn ourselves to feeling powerless, determined or limited. Being willing to accept responsibility for being a total person gives life a whole new meaning and texture. Once whole, we access parts of ourselves previously unrecognized, and we participate in life's creative activities with a fuller sense of purpose. To embrace the fullness of our human nature involves us in an experience of life as it was intended: a creative, alive and enjoyable adventure.

We can live life in all these dimensions only when we have embraced and accepted our totality and wholeness. Bringing our consciousness fully into oneness, and experiencing the innate beauty of every world of human experience, constitutes the beginning of a new and exciting journey through life.

Enjoying life's opportunities and taking charge of our creative options - these are the benefits of oneness. Loving fully and living freely become increasingly more tangible in our daily experience; and oneness is the key. Expressing meaningfully, achieving intentionally, and creating purposefully is our intended earthly path; oneness is the dynamic principle that empowers these possibilities.

It's up to us. With intention and dedication, we can invent and evolve a world of our own choosing. Equipped with a consciousness of oneness, we can fashion our future according to our personal design. With oneness as our path, we can accomplish whatever we decide upon. Oneness - our nature, our pathway, our destiny - establishes us in our inherent right to create our future with power and sensitivity. Oneness is our strength. Oneness is our hope. Oneness is our key. It's our world; it's our choice; it's our invitation. It's up to us! *Oneness, our heritage; oneness, our path; oneness, our destiny.*

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This book contains a new and simple philosophy. It looks at our human existence from a combined philosophical, psychological, religious, spiritual, scientific and practical focus. Our search for the meaning of human life on earth has posed a confusing and complex series of questions from the beginning of time; this book reunites us with our basic nature and our original purpose.

The underlying purpose of human life is this: to create. The human condition invites us to experience and enjoy our innately creative nature in innumerable ways. We express creative drives, energies and powers through every cell of our body, every thought of our mind, every feeling of our emotion, and every inspiration of our spirit. We are creative beings, from beginning to end. Our purpose in human life is to spend our time experiencing, celebrating and actively taking charge of this creative adventure.

At some point in history, we began to lose touch with the joys of creativity. In addition, we ceased to function as unified beings, and we split our consciousness into subdivided parts. We separated ourselves from one another and from our earthly support system; more radically, we distanced ourselves from our own deep source of knowing. Thus, we have spent many centuries feeling not only separated from our greater Source and from one another, but also from our inner selves. As a result, humanity has experienced conflict, pain and uncertainty.

This book calls us back to our heritage. Through its pages, we are invited to see ourselves in our unified nature, as we were originally created. Oneness, the theme of this writing and our original state of consciousness, is explored and shown as our initial starting point as well as our future destiny. A significant purpose in our present stage of human evolution is the rediscovery of this basic nature and our acceptance of its power for personal and global transformation. We are headed toward a new world, and a consciousness of oneness allows us to take full charge of its creation.

Creativity, our underlying orientation and purpose, is the central and most fulfilling facet of our human dance of life. As involved and decisive creators, we participate in life's ever-changing experiences in ways that complete and fulfill our dynamic and purposeful nature. We create ourselves, our lives and our world; such creation is our inherent right and destiny.

We live and create our lives in and through a fourfold consciousness, that is, in four arenas of inner experience. These worlds of creative experience are the innermost world of *spirit*, the symbolic world of *myth*, the moving world of *energy*, and the observable world of *reality*. Each of these subsystems of consciousness serves as a unique source of knowing and of creative power. Each acts independently as well as interdependently, for the sake of our total well-being. Each world of consciousness allows us an essential and necessary perspective for the sake of our creative fulfillment.

Each arena of this fourfold consciousness is powerful, meaningful and important to our overall functioning. Most of us, however, have separated ourselves from the first three worlds and focus primarily on the expressive world of reality; some have even come to believe that this latter world of observable experience is the only valid expression of life's meaning.

In truth, however, we are so much more than simply a humanity tied to an external world of experience. Each of us lives in a spiritually inspiring, mythically rich, energy-abundant, and externally expressive world at one and the same time. More specifically, we are innately capable of being deeply spiritually rooted, choosing our underlying beliefs and myths, taking charge of our energy, and creating our reality in responsible ways. Through living and integrating these four dynamic worlds, each of us is capable of a full and complete life. We are capable of oneness.

We are now at a time when we are returning to our original consciousness of oneness; more specifically, we are uniting our fourfold consciousness into its natural state of unity. Both individually and as a collective family, we are allowing this more integrated consciousness to become the foundation for creating our future. Oneness is our heritage. It is also our present path back to the unfoldment of our destiny.

It is up to us, both individually and together, to decide how we shall create our lives and our futures. We are invited, throughout the pages of this writing, to take charge of our every creative effort, with awareness and full consciousness. We are invited further to enjoy the spirit, myths, energy and reality of our creations without resorting to our duality's historical fears or feelings of powerlessness.

Finally, this book's greatest invitation to us is one of total celebration. It is not only our heritage but also our destiny to integrate our spirit, dreams and energies into a conscious experience called *celebration of life*.

To celebrate our human experience on this planet of creative life is our greatest pleasure and our most perfect destiny. Together - as one - we shall create exactly the conditions for such an experience. Oneness is our hope, key and promise for this adventure. Oneness, our most natural and fulfilling state, is our destiny.

Conclusion

This book invites us to create a new world. As a human race, we have used our creative talents to build a consciousness focused primarily on what I have called the world of reality. Today, we are ready to broaden this consciousness to include all perspectives on and approaches to human living. We are, in fact, already opening ourselves to a vast, liberated and powerful consciousness of oneness. Each one of us is experiencing this integrative process in a unique yet meaningful way. In oneness, we can take charge of ourselves and our collective world with a dynamic power and a greater probability for success.

What is your present response to this phenomenon of oneness? How are you inviting yourself to create your self, your personal world and our future? Are you willing to assume full responsibility as *creator* of every facet of your life? What are you now ready to commit to, in terms of fulfilling your personal and unique destiny? What is your individual role in our collective and co-creative adventure?

These questions invite you to enter personally and intentionally into our destined creation of life on earth. They open the door to your response. Your answer could make a total difference in the way you lead your own life, as well as contribute meaningfully to our collective life.

More and more, our human family is committing itself to this new creation. In every way - personally, interpersonally and globally - we are coming together in dedication to a new world order. You have an opportunity - indeed, you are personally invited - to become a part of this creative involvement. The time is now; the stage is set; your answer is awaited. You are on deck, ready to play your role in this evolving creation.

A new myth is in the process of being created, both in you and in our world of external expression. In this book, I have called it the vision of peace. Others might refer to it as the myth of freedom; while still others could call it the ideal of love. Whatever label we place on it, its accomplishment will be *our creation, our life and our future*. You are an integral part of the realization of this dream. You play an essential and important part in this creative activity, in that your personal talents contribute significantly to its expressive forms.

Are you willing to take on this collaborative role? Are you ready to be an active and conscious contributor to our collective creation? Are you prepared to embrace a consciousness of oneness, in which you are a daily member of a team of creative players in life's unfolding?

A new era of great human achievements is at hand. We have begun to build a new world through the power of our oneness. In unity, we are truly strong, and our integrated consciousness is the key to taking active charge of our future. Together, we shall accomplish significant and dynamic changes in our world; together, we shall bring about the destiny of our choice.

Oneness is truly our *heritage* - its presence lies powerfully in our personal and collective memory. Oneness is likewise our *path* - it is already serving as our renewed vehicle and means to an exciting future. Oneness also constitutes our *destiny* - we have deeply committed our unified consciousness to a key role in our creative inventions.

In your personal integration, you become a powerful creator of your life's circumstances and events. In our collective integration, we all become the fashioners of our world's circumstances. You are face to face with the power of this integrated consciousness, for yourself and for us all. You have before you the choice that will determine the nature and outcome of your, as well as our, future - the choice of embracing oneness. It's our heritage. It's our path. It's our destiny.

PHILOSOPHY/PSYCHOLOGY/RELIGION

ONENESS: OUR HERITAGE, OUR PATH, OUR DESTINY

- ... presents a revolutionary picture of you as creative and powerful
- ... expresses a dynamic philosophy of life: that of *oneness*
- ... explores oneness as our original birthright, and demonstrates how to re-attain it in our lives
- ... gives a refreshing vision of ourselves as creators of our world

ONENESS is a different kind of book. It explores human life from an integrative perspective, and invites us to own:

- our basic human purpose: creativity
- the four worlds of consciousness: spirit, myth, energy, reality
- the power of oneness: creation of our destiny
- oneness and individuality: building blocks for fulfillment



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